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COMMONWEAL

CRITICS' BOOK CHOICES FOR CHRISTMAS:

Emil Antonucci • Holmes Rolston, III • Karen Sue Smith
Sally Fitzgerald • David Hertihy • Robert H. Bell
Patrick Jordan • David Burns • Peggy R. Ellsberg
Fred Siegel • Denise Lardner Carmody

What's wrong with Operation Rescue?
CHARLES R. DiSALVO

Dear Constituent: Here's where I stand on abortion
JOHN E. BRANDL

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CORRESPONDENCE

Cunningham's choice

Poway, Calif.

To the Editors: The religious booknotes by Lawrence S. Cunningham are uniformly superb. His choice of books and depth of perception are always refreshing.

REV. MSGR. CHARLES J. DOLLEN

Daniel & rap

Livingston, Mont.

To the Editors: Like the Daniel featured in the October 20 issue, "Daniel: Beloved by God and by Me," by Bridget Balthrop Morton, I "sometimes think like a black person." More than that, at forty-five, I have spent more than half my adult life willingly living in predominantly black neighborhoods. In part this was due to Christ's admonishment to be concerned about the poor; some was due to feeling more comfortable in the open, active, Afro-American community.

Brother Daniel doesn't like to go to Mass; he would rather listen to some "bad" rocking rap. Well, Daniel, I have found that cultural overlay just scratches the surface. In fact, some of it is created by some downright sick individuals. Religion—or should I say spirituality—is really where the meeting is taking place. Some of my fondest moments have been the storefront churches. That is what we can do: we can meet at the true rock—the rock of Christ.

DANIEL R. PETERSON

Roadblocks to faith

Loretto, Pa.

To the Editors: I wish to compliment Rev. Joseph M. Champlin for his insightful article "Barriers to the Sacraments" [October 20]. Permit me to add a few more examples of obstacles being placed in the way of the faithful who ask for nothing more than what they have a right to as Catholics.

While in most cases it may be preferable for a couple to wait for a minimum period of time before being married, in at least some cases this is inconvenient or impossible. My own diocese has recently issued guidelines by which a six-month waiting period is apparently mandatory. This, in spite of canon 1116 (#1) which states that if there are no impediments, Catholics have the right to be married within a month. Canon law establishes no minimum time but does establish a maximum time. Rather than inform the couple of their rights, the diocese has placed a barrier in their way.

While canon law suggests the age of discretion as the proper time for the sacrament of confirmation and popes have warned that it should not be postponed past the age of twelve, my diocese has recently mandated a much later age. This apparently was done without concern for the lack of historical precedent or the ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox churches.

In both of these examples one might detect a lack of confidence in the faith of the *Cristifideles*. That same faith, which the church has always presumed, is subordinated to the understanding that they seek.

RAYMOND J. SEYMOUR

A physicist's view

San Jose, Calif.

To the Editors: I liked David Carlin's observation on abortion ["A Tragedy Without Villains," October 6] that his feelings were prochoice while his thinking was prolife. I believe his instincts may have been more valid than his (or the church's) thinking.

I am a product of the Catholic schools (seventeen years) and also a physicist. As a Catholic I wish I could go along with the church. But as a scientist I can only see its reasoning on this subject as something from a different century, not the thirteenth, but rather Aristotle's. When we ask [about the fetus] "is it alive?" or "is it a person?" we are using the language of Aristotle's logic by setting up these categories (life...) and then asking whether something belongs to it or not. But Galileo has given us a real improvement on Aristotle's categories.

The property of belonging or not belonging to a category is the counterpart of a binary variable, one with only these two possible values. But almost any attribute we think of can be located on some *spectrum* (or several spectra). The kind of variable that scientists since Galileo have used to describe these spectra is a *continuous* or many-valued variable, e.g., height =5.5 or 6.0 feet as opposed to just "tallness." When the church then speaks on abortion, using terms like "life" or "personhood," it is using a language that my discipline has generally left behind. The language would probably sound fine to my former classmates who are lawyers, but from the point of view of a scientist, each of the terms seems to demand a continuous variable. The reason is that each corresponds to a spectrum, with "life" running from a primitive cell to the adult human, and "personhood" involving everything from the higher functions of thought and love, down through the animal operations, and on to the lowest functions which an early fetus shares with a vegetable.

The church rehabilitated Galileo several years ago. Good. But, when, I wonder, will it modernize its language to the point where its teachings can speak to his followers?

THOMAS F. O'MALLEY

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COMMONWEAL 65

CONTENTS

Volume CXVI, Number 21

Correspondence	658
Editorials	659
If nothing is knowable...: *David R. Carlin, Jr.*	661
The least of these: *Abigail McCarthy*	663
What's wrong with Operation Rescue?: *Charles R. DiSalvo*	664
Our pal Pol Pot?: *Justin J. Green & Brian Whitmore*	668
Screen: *Tom O'Brien*	670
Stage: *Gerald Weales*	671

BOOKS

Critics' choices for Christmas: *Emil Antonucci, Holmes Rolston, III, Karen Sue Smith, Sally Fitzgerald, David Herlihy, Robert H. Bell, Patrick Jordan, David Burns, Peggy R. Ellsberg, Fred Siegel, Denise Lardner Carmody* 677

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Consider the wall

"Something there is that doesn't love a wall." At the literal level, Robert Frost's "something" was weather, the freezing and thawing that move the earth and finally topple the most solid human constructions. But, of course, he meant something more. Good fences do not make good neighbors when their only purpose is to divide, to wall us off from one another, to symbolize and enforce our separation. And there is something in us that hates such walls, that wants to bring them down. And so, in Berlin, with a suddenness hard to credit, a wall has come down.

Joy, a sense of liberation, a befuddling realization that they had done it were written on the faces of the East Germans who found themselves walking through the barrier that seemed to divide them forever from family, friends, and freedom. Breaching the wall in 1989 has captured our imaginations as much as building it did in 1961. The symbolic role the wall has played—in the cold war; in cementing the alliance of Western Europe and the U.S.; in the iconography of division, destruction, and nuclear threat; in spymaster George Smiley's bone-cold vigils under its shadow—all of these must give way to new meanings.

At the moment, perhaps three are discernible. First, by bringing down the wall, the East Germans have confirmed their government in an accelerated pace of political reform. Second, by refusing to arrest the pace of events in the militarily strategic GDR, Mikhail Gorbachev once again confirms a limited autonomy for the evolution of Eastern Europe. Third, Smiley has lost his wall—a possibility that may have been foreseen by his prescient creator, John le Carré, in last year's *The Russia House*, which sketched a more nuanced international intrigue pitting peacemakers East and West against cold warriors everywhere. This is not to make light of the historic event—made possible by the spontaneous act of the East German people walking out on their government (in contradistinction to Berthold Brecht's satiric fantasy—the government, growing unhappy with the people, dismissed it and appointed a new one).

But the breaching of the wall should not be infused with more meaning than it can realistically bear. Despite the courage shown by so many East Germans in recent months—from the refugees of summer, held so long in Hungary, to the nightly vigils in Leipzig—it represents as much gift as achievement, a culmination of events taking place and ideas being promulgated elsewhere. Moreover, the dramatic, picturesque, and telegenic joining of East and West Berlin are part of a beginning, not an outcome. The East Germans must still construct a genuine political culture and a functioning pluralistic democracy. In this situation, drama can be the enemy. For, as the people of Germany, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans have good historical reason to know, events can have their own dynamic; they can come to dominate politicians, political systems, and finally the people themselves.

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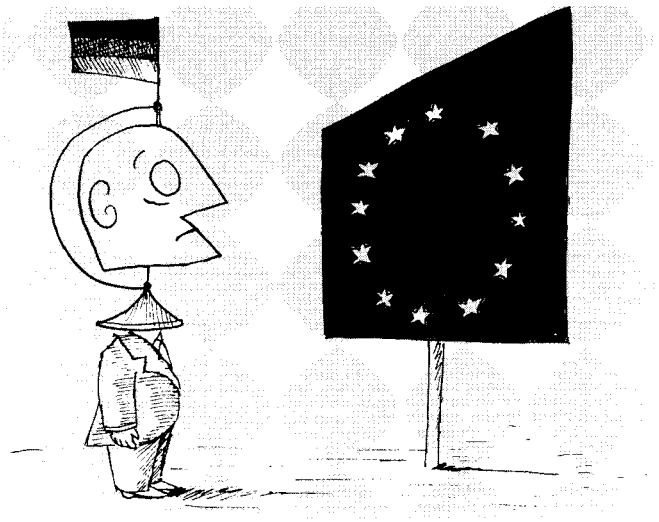

However powerful a symbol the end of the wall may be, to our mind a sturdier one (and a surer measure of what is needed if Eastern Europe is to free itself from an ideological straitjacket and a bureaucratic morass) is the record of Poland's Solidarity movement. Having successfully resisted the government's efforts to crush it, Solidarity has accepted, without being overwhelmed, the enormous responsibility of both running the government and managing the economy. Daunting tasks; but at least ones Lech Walesa and his comrades in resistance can tackle with a foundation built on mutual trust and lengthy political debates, many of them carried on in prison and in the underground out of the public glare of TV cameras and the sometimes mischievous interpretations of the news media.

The high drama of Berlin in November cannot be taken as an unqualified promise of good things to come. Euphoria must give way to solid thinking and careful reflection. For one thing, the end of the wall prematurely raises the question of German reunification, a destabilizing issue in the unexpected rush of events. Chancellor Helmut Kohl was right to reassure Poland on that point; he must do the same for France and the Soviet Union. The current policy vacuum in Washington may have the unintended effect of braking the momentum of events, but finally George Bush must join with other Western leaders in devising a policy that provides financial aid and technical assistance to Poland, Hungary, and East Germany while keeping NATO intact, maintaining the 1992 schedule for European economic integration, and reassuring Mikhail Gorbachev and his government of our continuing support and benign interest in the evolution toward democracy both in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

SAVE EL SALVADOR

While the wall was cracking in Berlin, barricades were going up all over El Salvador, particularly in its capital, San Salvador. For a decade, San Salvador has also been a divided city in a divided land. The intense November offensive by the FMLN guerrillas and the massive counterattack by the Salvadoran military merely confirmed what Salvadorans have known all the time: the country is ruled by the gun and divided by walls of the mind.

To express one's thoughts freely in El Salvador—for example, to call for a negotiated settlement and an end to the war—is to arouse suspicion and court death. That realization came crashing down on U.S. citizens with the cold-blooded assassination of six Jesuits and two helpers last month. With it came the necessity of reexamining U.S. policy toward El Salvador.

After ten years of civil war; after a containment policy that included U.S. military advisers and $4.5 billion of U.S. economic and military assistance; after the murder of over 70,000 Salvadorans, mostly noncombatants, mostly the victims of right-wing death squads; after the displacement of one in ten Salvadorans and the exile of perhaps a fifth of the total population, we can only conclude that U.S. policy has been a massive failure. There is no peace, no victory, no democracy in El Salvador.

- No peace. The country is imploding economically, politically, militarily. A vast chasm lies between the rich and the poor, between the haves and the majority. That fact is seldom reported in the U.S. but all one has to do is spend a few hours outside the U.S. Embassy to see it. Vast shanty towns where women and children walk for hours to fetch water or wood for the fire (contrasted to the bunkered compounds and armored luxury cars driven by the elite). Large segments of the countryside under guerrilla control. Government soldiers everywhere in the cities and towns—57,000: tense, suspecting, intimidating, arbitrary, a law unto themselves; after ten years of U.S. involvement, an armed camp on a hair trigger. And in politics, when the opposition has not been driven underground by death squads, private bodyguards are necessary at all times; in public, it's bulletproof vests for candidates. Private citizens in casual conversation do not even mention certain names.
- No victory. Seventy thousand dead, but a stalemate. In November, the largest offensive of the war by the FMLN, but neither side gains an advantage. No rush to join or repulse the guerrillas. No rush to support the army. The biggest losers, as always: civilians. Without U.S. support, the army would collapse. Our diplomats say the Salvadoran military has been "professionalized." They describe a policy goal, not the facts. The army remains a rogue beast. What is our purpose in sustaining it?
- No democracy. A million Salvadorans have voted with their feet: they have fled. Rule is by the gun. The six so-called democratic elections heralded by the U.S. in the last decade are largely cosmetic—a veneerocracy. Political institutions are threatened from outside and from within. The FMLN murders mayors and government officials; members of the army and right-wing death squads murder centrists and leftists; all with impunity.

President Alfredo Cristiani admits the army may have had a hand in the assassination of the Jesuits. His attorney general, Mauricio Eduardo Colorado, follows him up by threatening the Catholic bishops of the country for persisting "in keeping alive the questionable ideology of the church of the poor," and calls on the pope to remove them. Mr. Colorado, of course, holds

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the office that investigates assassinations. Christian Democrat presidential candidate Fidel Chavez Mena, following the Jesuits' murders, warns: "This is only the beginning of acts against political leaders, union members, and peasants." Medical workers, educators, church and human rights workers across the country are threatened, put on death lists, detained by the army. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Bernard Aronson concedes that "the right-wing death squads probably did come out of the closet." In what deep closet does the U.S. State Department dwell? The death squads have been increasingly active since the March election. The Jesuits were not their first victims.

There can be no democracy where the majority of the people are in social, economic, or political chains. Salvadorans, despite ten years of heavy U.S. involvement, remain enchained in all three. It is time we determine why.

The Bush administration should cut off military assistance now, and the U.S. Congress should suspend future aid until a new policy can be formulated. Congress should begin by looking at the condition of the majority of Salvadorans and examining that people's desire for peace. That, in fact, was the message of murdered Jesuit rector Ignacio Ellacuria the day before his death. It was the same message Oscar Romero had delivered ten years before to political leaders: "If you do not concern yourselves with the poverty of our people as though they were your own family, you will not be able to save society." Absent acceptance of that goal—in San Salvador as well as Washington—and of any vision of how to pursue it, our aid is only multiplying casualties.

ABORTION AND THE LEGISLATOR

DEAR CONSTITUENT:
HERE'S WHERE I STAND

Responding to a *Commonweal* editorial (Nov. 3), a reader contends, and demonstrates, that not all politicians are evading the debate over abortion. He is State Senator John E. Brandl of Minnesota; what follows is a slightly edited version of the letter he has been sending this fall in response to constituents asking his views on abortion-related legislative issues.

THE EDITORS

It seems to me that the 1973 *Roe* v. *Wade* decision by which the U.S. Supreme Court set aside state government restrictions on abortion has had mixed effects. Large numbers of women now have an alternative to the desperate anguish of lacking control over an undesired pregnancy. However, an abortion ethic seems to have swept over this country. It is as though we are thinking that, having become legal, abortion is no longer a serious moral issue. Perhaps government has fostered a moral callousness, an insensitivity to our responsibilities to one another, including those to developing human life. Government can do better than that.

After considering the great range of views on this issue, from one polar position to another, I conclude that a more moderate position than either extreme should prevail. Please understand that my receptiveness to different points of view on the issue is not contrived to curry political favor with any interest group nor is my position calculated to increase my prospects for being re-elected. I intend to vote in the Senate according to my judgment of what is best for Minnesota.

At one extreme, some argue not only that a fertilized ovum is a human person from the moment of conception but also that government should forbid all abortion just as it outlaws unjustified homicide. For these people, permitting abortion is the same as permitting the killing of innocent persons—in a word, murder—so it should be outlawed.

At the other extreme, some argue that a woman's right to choose on this matter should be absolute and inviolable. To them, a fetus at any stage of development is not a separate person but a part of a woman's body over which government should have no control.

I reject both of these extreme positions.

Notwithstanding my own beliefs regarding the morality of abortion, the argument that from conception a fertilized ovum is a fully human person is not convincing enough to induce me to endorse a governmental ban on all abortions. This argument has failed to persuade large numbers of Minnesotans—decent, reasonable, responsible people. Surely it is a tragedy that a million and a half abortions occur each year in the U.S., but for many people the magnitude of the tragedy is diminished by their conviction that a fertilized ovum, or several cells not yet implanted in the uterine wall, or an embryo not yet possessed of a human brain, do not constitute a person. Of course there is no reasonable case for allowing murder, but one can make a reasonable argument that an embryo after a few weeks of gestation is not a human person.

The moment at which to attribute personhood to a developing fetus is disputed. I believe that the fetus is deserving of respect—increasing respect as it develops over time. But the civil law, in my judgment, should not reflect the position that a fetus is a person from conception. Too many people flatly disagree, with reason, and will act accordingly regardless of what the law says. Government should not ban abortions in the early weeks of pregnancy.

But if it is not at all clear that a fetus should be considered a human person from conception, there is no denying that it is developing into a person. As that happens, the rest of the society through its government acquires an interest in the matter, an interest in protecting incipient human life. Ironically, in this regard those holding the position that choice should be inviolable reject that part of *Roe* v. *Wade* which, while recognizing a right to privacy that would permit abortion, insisted that society has an interest in the developing fetus. In that decision the Court declared: "[A]ppellants ....argue that the woman's right is absolute and that she is entitled to terminate her pregnancy at whatever time, in whatever way, and for whatever reason she alone chooses. With this we do not agree....[T]he right [to an abortion] is not unqualified and must be considered against important state interests in regulation." I agree with that declaration of state purpose.

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The developing fetus deserves increasing governmental protection as it acquires personhood. The DFL [Democratic- Farmer-Labor] party, of which I am a member, stands not for a libertarian individualism; it stands for the proposition that we are a community with responsibilities for one another and that society, through its government, looks out for the weak and otherwise unprotected. From no later than the time of viability, when sustained life outside the womb is possible, the government should provide protection for the fetus and indeed outlaw abortion.

To state and reject both of the extreme positions on abortion described above is no mere debating trick. They are real positions, held strongly, in each case by a minority of Minnesotans who are working very hard to prevail in the political arena and prepared to support only those candidates who agree entirely with them. I fear that in the near future politicians will tend even more than at present to be pushed into one camp or the other and that the legislature will be even more polarized on this issue than it is now.

The responsibility of a politician who rejects both polar positions is not to accede to the less objectionable of the two, but rather to put forward alternatives. That appears to be what the vast majority of Minnesotans desire, but the majority is often uninvolved. Political lobbying is usually left to those with strong views; on this issue political discourse and posturing tend to extreme positions, even though both reason and majority opinion seem to me to be on the side of rejecting both extremes. I believe neither polar position should or will prevail.

The politician's responsibility on this matter is different from that of the moralist or the theologian, and is more dissimilar yet from that of an individual deciding whether to have an abortion. A woman contemplating having an abortion is considering a particular situation, whereas politicians must enact laws governing a myriad of situations and for millions of people holding a great variety of moral views about the appropriateness of the act. The politician who respects a woman's choice must also recognize society's duty and desire to affirm the dignity of developing life. Even the politician who abhors abortion may conclude that a law tolerating it in some circumstances is preferable to complete abolition. The responsibility of the politician extends past considering whether there is a reasonable basis for a contrary position; it includes weighing the untoward effects of widespread violation of the law by those who disagree with it.

The politician's personal position regarding the morality of abortion does not necessarily imply what public policy ought to be. In politics one does not seek to place in law all of one's own moral beliefs. "The law," said the greatest of American Catholic philosophers, John Courtney Murray, in another context, "is required to be tolerant of many evils that morality condemns." I will continue trying to dissuade people from choosing abortion, but will also continue voting in the Senate to permit that choice in some circumstances.

We come then to the question most difficult for me as a legislator: What should be the elements of a public policy that asserts society's interest and at the same time respects the rights both of a woman who wishes to abort a fetus and of the developing fetus? A politician who rejects the polar positions must confront all the various legislative proposals not as one issue but many different abortion issues. Simply being for or against abortion does not settle these matters as it does for the adherents of the extremes.

At this point there is no way of knowing the content of the proposals concerning abortion that will come before the legislature, but I intend to apply the following guidelines in my decision making:

If many citizens hold a position for which a reasonable case can be made, then a politician should seek to accommodate defensible elements of that position whether or not other citizens are strongly opposed to it. Alternatives to abortion, e.g., contraception, adoption, and adequate child support, are preferable and should be encouraged by government. Abortion has to do not only with a right of individual women to choose and individual fetuses to live; society has a legitimate interest here. Public policy should embody society's judgment that resort to abortion is not a matter of indifference and not just a form of birth control, but a deeply unfortunate expedient sometimes justified by compelling circumstances. (French law permits abortion before the tenth week, to women "in a situation of distress.") In the early weeks of pregnancy a woman wishing an abortion should not be subject to government intervention. (In Minnesota nearly 90 percent of abortions occur in the first twelve weeks, which is before the embryo has completed acquiring the physical characteristics of a human brain.) After that early period there should be a requirement that her consent be informed; that is, she should know the characteristics of a fetus at that stage and should know of the alternatives to abortion. Except to protect the life of the mother, abortions past the twenty-third week should be illegal. (That is the age of viability. Some babies born at twenty-three weeks survive; none born before that age survive. Fewer than 1 percent of abortions take place after that time.)

These guidelines do not speak to all of the proposals that will come up. There is, for example, the matter of public funding of abortions, which I have favored and voted for. Nonetheless, a right does not necessarily imply a guarantee of public money. Those opposing all abortions are so deeply offended by government's subsidizing it that there is good reason for putting some restrictions on the use of public funds. Similarly, in the past I have voted against requiring that before a pregnant adolescent could have an abortion, her parents would need to be notified or to approve. More and more it seems to me appropriate to require notification of at least one of an adolescent's parents in such a situation.

In summary, my position on abortion is this: The appropriate governmental resolution of the abortion question is to reject the extreme positions and to craft moderate alternatives. That will not satisfy people who hold either polar position, but it respects the wishes of the majority and I think it is a reasonable stance to take in a debate that frequently has not been characterized by reasoned dialogue.

Your comments would be appreciated.

JOHN E. BRANDL

John E. Brandel represents District 62 in the Minnesota State Senate and is professor of public affairs at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

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THE LEAST OF THESE

MAKING ROOM IN THE INN

As Christmas approaches, the knowledge that so many children are homeless grows more painful. The temptation to look aside is almost overwhelming because the problem looks intractable. In the face of it the seasonal appeals for gifts of toys, clothing, and food, and charity-sponsored Christmas parties seem a mockery.

It is estimated that some 300,000 quasi-orphans are cycling through foster homes. At best they receive consistent care for a few years from well-intentioned adults who are, nevertheless, not likely to form emotional attachments to children assigned to them for an uncertain block of time. At worst they are put in the hands of case-hardened adults in foster care for the money. They are taken in and out of schools, receive little if any health care, are often shifted from home to home because of age requirements: one home is not licensed for teen-agers, another can take only preschool children, for example. They may be arbitrarily returned to the abusive or disorderly family from which they came. And these are the lucky ones.

Add to the children in foster care the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of neglected children left every day at playgrounds without food or money or put out to roam the streets by ignorant, unfit, and/or drug-addicted parents—usually mothers too young to be parents. In the cities where our super-rich live we know that families with several children are crammed into single rooms in "hotel" shelters. These children do not go to school regularly, often go hungry and dirty, and have little knowledge of daily living in a civilized society. Four- and five-year-olds play in the street; ten-year-olds deal drugs.

I cannot forget the poignant incident related by Joyce Ladner, professor of social work, in a recent article in the *Washington Post*. She tells of a child she saw at a youth center: "While waiting for my son to finish basketball practice I saw a little four-year-old boy, wiry and slight of build, struggling to carry an infant girl on his hip. As possessive as any parent to a newborn, he clung to her as he played with his friends, chasing across the gymnasium floor.... He rejected my offer to hold the baby for, he explained, she was entrusted to his care alone. When a group of little girls six to eight years old grabbed the baby from his arms...to change its filthy diaper, he beat on the door (of the bathroom). 'Mama's going to change her when she gets home tonight!' he cried frantically, 'give her back now!'"

According to Professor Ladner, this was not an isolated incident. All over Washington, D.C., little children are trying to hold together families torn asunder by their parents' use of drugs. Agencies have a backlog of more than 700 cases of child neglect. Some of these are of toddlers locked alone in apartments for days.

The welfare system in most cities and states still addresses the problem of neglected and abandoned children on the basis of an outworn and probably never realistic thesis—that the problem of each child must be worked out according to a permanent plan which will result either in reunification with the biological family or adoption. The reality is that most of these children from the inner city are the offspring of the second and third generation of teen-age mothers isolated from any extended family and living in extreme poverty. There are no real biological families or homes to which they may return.

What of adoption? The administration is encouraging it—more as an alternative to abortion than as a solution to homelessness. Attorney General Thornburgh recently urged all employees in the Justice Department to give an example by considering adoption—and especially the adoption of children who are, because of disabilities, age, or race, not sought as adoptees. The only practical help offered by the administration, however, is a $3,000 one-time tax break for those who adopt children with handicaps or "special needs."

Nevertheless, adoption *is* at least part of the solution. Bruce Chapman, now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute who was an assistant to the president in the Reagan administration, has called attention to the report of the 1987 White House Task Force on Adoption—a report, he says, "largely painted over by the White House issues artists of the time." Yet there are 900,000 out-of-wedlock children born each year and only 51,000 adopted, he reminds us.

"Adoption," says Chapman, "does work. It breaks the cycle of family instability and replaces expensive and impersonal government social programs with the devoted love and resources of permanent parents." He argues that unwed mothers-to-be are not now presented with adoption as a good option and urges that federal monies be made more readily available to women in the late months of pregnancy. "When a woman knows that such needs as food, lodging (to avoid peer pressure), medical care, schooling, and career counseling can be met and if she knows her child will have a secure and loving home, chances for a relinquishment decision improve." There is a law which requires foster care agencies to place children for adoption who are unlikely to return safely to their birth parents. The administration can influence the Health and Human Services Department and state agencies to enforce it.

As good as adoption may be as a solution, it depends on the altruism of couples wishing to be parents. Only a heroic few will be led to take difficult "unadoptable" children. Race will remain an obstacle.

Joyce Ladner suggests that for the high-risk children of whom she writes we should bring back the orphanage—"not the huge impersonalized warehouses of old but small-scale caring institutions that can offer children, and their siblings, a place they can count on to nurture them." It is a good suggestion, one we should act on. Not all the orphanages of old were warehouses; some were true homes. We should look at them again and build on their achievements. But that is the subject for another column. □

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WHAT'S WRONG WITH OPERATION RESCUE?

UNCIVIL, UNLOVING, UNCONVINCING

CHARLES R. DiSALVO

"Abortion is the most difficult moral issue of our time, arousing deep emotions on both sides." Enough essays opening with those words have been written that, if they fueled a power plant, there would be enough energy to supply all the homes in Philadelphia for a year. We don't need another essay to lay out the moral issues for us. The fact is continued discussion of the abortion issue is a dead end, a waste of time, and a pointless exercise in chest-beating. No amount of verbal swordplay, rational debate, or moral argumentation between the two sides will resolve the issue. No court decision, certainly not *Webster* nor even any of *Webster*'s progeny, will quiet the passions abortion arouses. The losing side will simply continue to fight on. Abortion is a no-compromise issue.

But if one side could change the moral *feelings* that underlie and fuel the larger debate, the law, politics, and women's choices would mimic the change. The side that changes those feelings will be the side that wins. Moral feelings about abortion, however, cannot be changed with words.

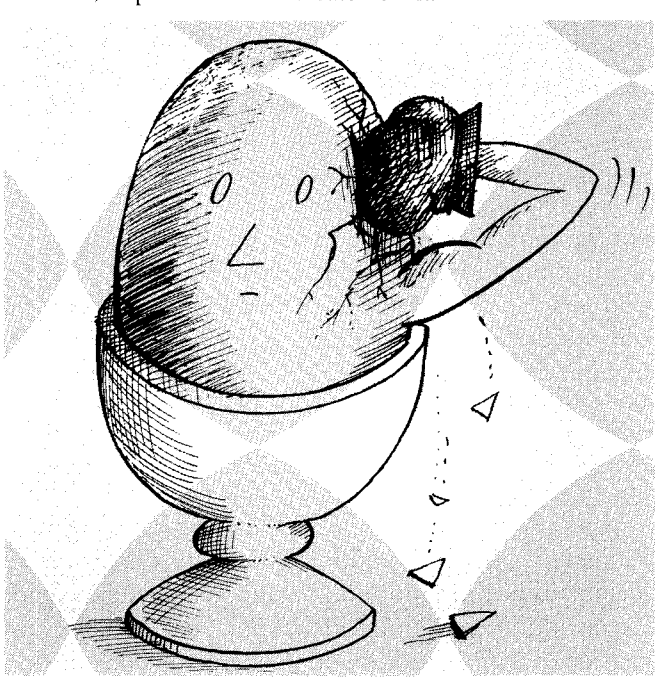
Enter civil disobedience. When words fail to resolve no-compromise issues, an open society has two choices: political violence or civil disobedience. Political violence coerces the opponent through force into acquiescence. Civil disobedience, properly understood and practiced, brings the opposition into areas that make productive discussion possible.

Because abortion remains a constitutionally protected right, at the moment only one side can employ civil disobedience. The prolife movement, largely through Operation Rescue, has taken advantage of this opportunity. As a result, I address myself here to the prolife movement. In the post-*Webster* future there may be occasion to apply the principles articulated here to the prochoice movement.

Civil disobedience has previously given American society a way out of no-compromise situations. At the turn of the century, women found that they could not obtain the right to vote in federal elections through the usual democratic means. They resorted to civil disobedience. In midcentury, blacks found that voting and lobbying were ineffective at enforcing Supreme Court decisions condemning segregation. They resorted to civil disobedience. And just two decades ago, many Americans of good conscience found no way in the traditional political system to disengage their country from an immoral Vietnam War. They too resorted to civil disobedience.

Of these episodes in the history of civil disobedience, the disobedience of the civil rights movement is the best paradigm for demonstrating the two essential functions of civil disobedience that make it a substitute for political violence. Used properly, civil disobedience can (1) advance debate on no-compromise issues, and (2) promote curative, institutional action on those same issues when normal democratic procedures fail.

Because it has these two uses, civil disobedience can have a substantial impact on public debate and opinion—so substantial, at times, as to create new public policies, to create new social attitudes, so powerful as to create new law. Two tactics of the



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civil rights movement illustrate the effective use of civil disobedience: the lunch-counter sit-ins and the Freedom Rides.

The sit-ins were aimed at eating places that had been segregated by custom and, in a few instances, by ordinances or statutes that expressly prohibited blacks from eating in restaurants with whites. Acting somewhat impulsively, four courageous college students engaged in the first sit-in in early 1960. The movement quickly spread and regular *en masse* arrests of would-be diners for breach of the peace, disorderly conduct, and trespass began. Three thousand six hundred persons were arrested during the twenty months following the first sit-in. Many of those arrested were subjected to the taunts and fists of white toughs.

This phase of the civil rights disobedience campaign was a ringing success. Sit-ins gave black leaders the leverage they needed to negotiate equal access to many places of business. According to historian Louis Sobel (*Civil Rights, 1960-1966*), by September 1961, "eating facilities in one or more establishments in 108...cities had been desegregated as a result of the sit-ins." In the process, the attitudes of some toward the race question began to soften, and Jim Crow laws fell by the wayside.

The sit-ins resulted in changes in the practices of business and service establishments throughout much of the South and in the border states; the Freedom Rides, by contrast, resulted in the creation of new regulatory law. Just as blacks were forbidden to eat at public lunch counters, so too were they prohibited from using eating and restroom facilities at bus stations in the southern and border states. The Freedom Riders challenged the customs and Jim Crow laws which held this kind of segregation in place. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the group that organized the first Freedom Ride, also aimed at forcing the Kennedy administration into a stronger pro-civil rights posture.

The first Freedom Ride was a difficult experience. The trip was slated to run from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans. The first arrest occurred on May 8, 1961, when one rider was arrested for attempting to get his shoes shined in a white barber shop in a bus terminal. The first violence occurred the next day when two riders were beaten while attempting to use a "whites only" waiting room. Serious violence took place in Anniston, Alabama, when the riders were greeted by a mob carrying chains, sticks, and iron bars. The riders were beaten while the police looked on. Later, the mob chased the bus down the road, smoke-bombed it, trapped the passengers in smoke and flame, and beat the passengers again as they fled. Eventually the Ride proceeded to Montgomery, and then to Jackson, where James Farmer, a CORE organizer, and the remaining riders (many of whom were new recruits replacing the injured original riders) were arrested and jailed for violating Jim Crow laws banning integration. Here the original Freedom Ride ended, but duplicates quickly sprang up all around the South as hundreds of new disobedients put their lives at risk for desegregation.

Before the Freedom Rides came to an end, hundreds were arrested on a variety of charges. These acts of civil disobedience produced national media attention and with it pressure upon the Kennedy administration to seek relief through the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), the body with jurisdiction over the bus terminals. Acting on the request of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the ICC issued a variety of rules disallowing racial segregation in the operation of interstate buses and terminals. In addition, the ICC prohibited interstate carriers from using segregated terminals. Finally, the ICC's stricture against racially segregated seating was ordered printed on all interstate tickets.

In this instance, the political pressure produced by the civil disobedience of the Freedom Riders resulted in the enactment of regulatory law, backed by the enforcement powers of the federal government.

This history teaches us that civil disobedience can alter the debate and forcefully advance discussion of no-compromise issues. When blacks recognized that quiet pleas for the enforcement of their rights went unanswered, they found that arrests and beatings at the hands of the police and the public worked to create a national debate on the race question. The disobedients caused public discussion to focus upon issues of vital importance that the normal democratic processes had ignored or refused to address. The action-promoting function of civil disobedience builds upon and extends the work of the debate-advancing function.

The civil rights disobedients were successful in promoting curative institutional action because the voluntary suffering they endured while challenging the status quo made the public ask questions: "Why are these blacks being beaten? Why are these disobedients suffering with such patience and not responding with anger or violence?" By asking such questions, the public was able to perceive a connection between the disobedients' suffering and the evil under protest.

There were four characteristics of the successful movement to integrate lunch counters and interstate bus travel in the South. Element number one: suffering. The public was able to focus on the heart of the disobedients' grievances, and, as a consequence, to sympathize with the disobedients' sincere efforts to set things right.

Element number two: sympathy. Politicians, business people, restaurant owners, and others felt the pressure of a popular sympathetic response.

Element number three: conversion. In each case, with the necessary political conversions made, an institutional response followed that effectively ended the crisis. The customs and laws that enforced segregated dining changed. The Kennedy administration, through the ICC, enacted new regulatory law that prohibited segregation in interstate bus transportation.

Element number four: action. In each case, civil disobedience led to social change.

In each case, the same moral and political elements are at work: The disobedients endure suffering; the public questions, then sympathizes with the disobedients; the opponent experiences some form of conversion; finally, curative societal or institutional action occurs. Suffering, sympathy, conversion, action.

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Each side of the abortion controversy has deeply held moral, social, and political views. If anything in the abortion debate can be a matter of common agreement, it is that each side has, at least until now, been unsuccessful at creating a broad and deep public consensus for its own views.

In an apparent reaction to this failure to create consensus by debate, persuasion, and other traditional democratic methods, the prolife movement has turned to civil disobedience. Participants in Operation Rescue typically block abortion facilities and are often arrested for trespass, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest. Let us examine the effectiveness of this civil disobedience.

Has Operation Rescue advanced the debate? The campaign has received moderately good coverage in the secular and religious media at both the national and local levels. As a consequence, for a period the public discussion centered not on the prochoice movement and its concerns, but on the prolife movement and its concerns. This focus has shifted following *Webster*, but for some time the disobedience of Operation Rescue gave its practitioners control of the debate agenda. It is fair to say, therefore, that insofar as the debate-advancing function of disobedience is concerned, the anti-abortion civil disobedience campaign has had its successes. The effectiveness of Operation Rescue for creating the conditions necessary for a curative societal or institutional response, however, is another question altogether.

The ability of any civil disobedience to evoke sympathy depends in part on the closeness of the connection between the evil being protested and the act of disobedience. In this respect there are two characteristics of the current disobedience campaign that limit its effectiveness: (1) Who is being arrested? (2) For what? In the civil rights movement, those whose rights were at stake were those arrested. But in Operation Rescue's disobedience those arrested are not those whose rights are at risk. Fetuses are at risk. The use of adults as surrogates weakens the movement's evocative abilities. But it is not just a question of having adult surrogates. The use of adult *men* in anti-abortion disobedience weakens the evocative possibilities further. Just as whites had a legitimate interest in integration, men also have a legitimate interest in abortion. But because of the special interests of women in the abortion controversy, the use of adult, male surrogates places limits on the movement's evocative capacity. The public's ability to perceive a connection between the disobedience and the evil protested is weakened.

A second type of connection concerns the act of disobedience itself. The closer the connection the act itself has to the evil being protested, the more evocative the disobedience is. The classic illustration of this principle is offered by the Freedom Rides. The riders were arrested and beaten to near-death for doing exactly that which they were forbidden to do and which they claimed a right to do.

By contrast, anti-abortion disobedients are being arrested for trespass, disorderly conduct, and the violation of injunctions. None of these charges is directly related to the destruction of prenatal life. There is nothing inherent in the nature of any of these charges that relates to an abortion. Consequently, the public has some trouble relating the act of civil disobedience to the evil being protested.

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This weakness in anti-abortion disobedience is shared by environmental disobedients who are arrested for scaling power plant fences, and antimilitary disobedients who are arrested on burglary charges for entering military establishments.

These two problems plague the current disobedience movement and, standing alone, would make its chances of success problematic. But there is a third, and more serious, difficulty. The abortion debate, it should be eminently clear to everyone, is not going to be won by any side that limits its tactics to intellectualized argumentation or exhortations to believe in certain moral, religious, or political principles. Civil disobedience can move people when argumentation and exhortation fail. But not all disobedience is so capable. Only civil disobedience that is characterized by sacrificial suffering is effective. Without sacrificial suffering a disobedient cannot generate public sympathy. If there is no sympathy, there are no conversions. If there are no conversions, there is no action.

But a disobedient with genuine love for her sisters and brothers on the other side of this debate is a disobedient whose suffering can be sacrificial. The disobedient who loves is a disobedient who is silent, who endures taunts without response, who suffers physical violence without complaint, who is not angry, who allows arrest to come without resistance, who mounts no legal defense but welcomes punishment, who, with her sisters and brothers, fills the jails—this disobedient generates public sympathy.

In contrast is the disobedient who hates. This disobedient is one who is angry, who hurls epithets at the other side, who has to be dragged kicking and screaming away from the arrest site and into court, who defiantly pleads not guilty, who complains of imprisonment—this disobedient generates no public sympathy.

The difference between these two types is all-important. The first disobedient says, "I believe so strongly in my cause that I will sacrifice my liberty, my freedom of expression, and indeed, my body for it." This type of disobedience—sacrificial disobedience—is the type of disobedience that causes the public to sit up and take notice. When the public asks, "Why are these gentle, sincere people suffering?" the channels of communication are open, free, clear for the disobedients' message to come through to the public. And the way is then open for the other phases of consensus-building—sympathy and conversion—to take place and lead to action.

By contrast, the second type of disobedience projects animosity, intolerance, self-righteousness. As a consequence, the channels of communication with the public buzz with static, distortion, noise. There is no room for these disobedients' ideas or feelings to get a hearing.

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With a few notable exceptions, neither side in the abortion debate understands the need, source, or place for sacrificial suffering in the resolution of no-compromise issues. While it is true that prolife activists such as Joan Andrews and Juli Loesch Wiley have silently suffered in defense of the unborn (Andrews has undergone a lengthy imprisonment), their example and message have largely gone unreplicated. The great majority of Operation Rescue disobedients are no friends of silent suffering. They self-righteously chant and sing at their demonstrations; they press their moral claims by shouting at incoming pregnant women; they resist arrest; they give pseudonyms to the police; they throw up legal defenses in court by saying the harm associated with violating trespass laws is justified by the need to prevent the greater evil of abortion. The injuries suffered by prolife disobedients at the hands of the arresting police—some have been serious, with one demonstrator's arm being broken in Los Angeles in June—have been a tragic waste. They have failed to generate sympathy precisely because the media—no friends of the prolife movement to begin with—are alienated by the arrogance of rescuers.

Since prolife supporters appear to have placed their trust in disobedience detached from sacrificial suffering, they have failed to generate sympathy. While Operation Rescue gained a temporary advantage by focusing the debate on its agenda, the prolife movement is not now capable of building a consensus for its view of morality and law because the effort has not included sacrificial suffering.

Martin Luther King, Jr. understood and practiced sacrificial suffering. Hear King's voice in these words he wrote in 1958:

> One may well ask: "What is the nonviolent resister's justification for this ordeal to which he invites men?"....The answer is found in the realization that unearned suffering is redemptive. Suffering, the nonviolent resister realizes, has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities.

King quotes Gandhi:

> "Things of fundamental importance to people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering....Suffering is infinitely...powerful... for converting the opponent and opening his ears which are otherwise shut...."

King understood that the ability to suffer in a way that evokes sympathy comes from the sufferer's decision to love the other. Elsewhere he says:

> Agape is disinterested love in which the individual seeks not his own good, but the good of his neighbor. Agape does not begin by discriminating between worthy and unworthy persons. It begins by loving others for their sakes. It...discovers the neighbor in every person it meets. Therefore, agape makes no distinction between friends and enemy; it is directed toward both. The best way to assure oneself that love is disinterested is to have love for the enemy-neighbor from whom you can expect no good in return, but only hostility and persecution.

King continues:

> ...[A]gape...springs from the need of the other person for belonging to the best in the human family. The Samaritan...was "good" because he responded to the human need that he was presented with. God's love...fails not because man needs his love.... The loving act of redemption was done "while we were...sinners"—that is, at the point of our greatest need for love. Since the white man's personality is greatly distorted by segregation, and his soul is greatly scarred, he needs the love of the Negro. The Negro must love the white man, because the white man needs his love to remove his tensions, insecurities, and fears.

Translate King into the present tense. Do prochoice women (and men) need the love of prolife women (and men) to remove their tensions, insecurities, and fears? Do prolife women (and men) need the love of prochoice women (and men) to remove their tensions, insecurities, and fears? Does each side somehow need the love of the other? Is either side of this debate capable of a sacrificial love? of sacrificial suffering? A question somewhat more easily answered is: in what ways could the prolife movement engage in sacrificial suffering as a way of building public understanding and perhaps even public consensus for its views?

The answer should be obvious. Continue Operation Rescue, but with a different spirit. It is not enough to love the fetus. That is admirable, but it converts no one. It is the prochoice doctor, the prochoice nurse, and—above all—the prochoice woman whom the movement must genuinely love. It is *their* hearts the movement must convert.

A change in spirit means a change in tactics. Noisy demonstrations, insults hurled at opponents, preaching at pregnant women, resistance to arrest, the erection of ornate "necessity defenses" which the public does not appreciate, and disrespectful exchanges with prosecutors and judges—all these tactics do nothing but hurt the prolife cause. They do not create conditions for sacrificial suffering and they deflect attention from the prolife message.

The movement's real allies are silence, cooperation with the police at the point of arrest and with the judge and prosecutor at the point of trial, and an uncomplaining submission to punishment. These are the tools for communicating the movement's suffering and message on open lines to the public.

These, then, are some of the possibilities open to the prolife movement for advancing the abortion debate, a debate attended by more division than the debate brought on by Vietnam, a debate more emotion-laden than the debate over women's suffrage, a debate more pervasive than even the civil rights debate, for this debate stretches into every legislature, every community, every church, every neighborhood, every family, every person, every woman.

It is a no-compromise debate. It is about fundamental notions of autonomy, motherhood, career, family, life. It will not be resolved by rational discussion. What is called for is a truly radical solution.

What is called for is love. Whoever can provide love, sacrifice, and suffering may very well be able to lead the American public to the consensus it so desperately needs. □

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OUR PAL POL POT?

U.S. DIPLOMACY BOMBS AGAIN

JUSTIN J. GREEN &
BRIAN WHITMORE

Cambodia's nasty guerrilla war appeared until recently to be inching toward a peaceable end. The failure of the Cambodian factions to reach agreement on whether the Khmer Rouge should participate in a future Cambodian government, however, has derailed settlement efforts; the goal of increased stability for mainland Southeast Asia continues to elude all the interested parties. Although the United States had no direct role in Prince Sihanouk's fall in 1970, its strong support for the antineutral, pro-U.S. Lon Nol regime which replaced Sihanouk surely had something to do with the growth of the Pol Pot-led Khmer Rouge. And the U.S. did bomb Cambodia to block the North Vietnamese use of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The U.S. thus bears some responsibility for the horrors of the "Killing Fields" which were a result of the Khmer Rouge's succession to power in the wake of South Vietnam's demise.

The events that followed Pol Pot's accession are well known to those familiar with Southeast Asia. The Vietnamese, responding to Cambodian border meddling and perhaps their own hegemonic fantasies, invaded Cambodia in 1979 and overthrew the Pol Pot regime. After installing the friendly Heng Samrin government, Hanoi's large army remained behind to shore up this regime in its early years and insure that the defeated but still strong Pol Pot forces would not return. Although Cambodian economic recovery has been slow and the Heng Samrin regime rather inefficient, nevertheless the government and its Vietnamese supporters became legitimate to its citizenry if not for superlative accomplishments, then for their ability to keep the much feared Pol Pot at arm's length. Contrary to the recent statements of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and his ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Tommy T.B. Koh, the government of Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen would be the likely winner in any election including Son Sann, the Sihanouk factions, and the Khmer Rouge despite the continuing popularity of Sihanouk. The alliance of convenience forged among the latter three has led many Cambodians to doubt Son Sann's and Sihanouk's independence of Pol Pot.

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The Soviet Union followed up its wartime support for Hanoi with increased aid after the unification of Vietnam in 1975. This policy had several roots including the opportunity to gain greater influence in Southeast Asia at U.S. expense, the desire to frustrate China's goal of dominating the region, and most important the need to respond to the deterioration of Sino-Vietnamese relations and the West's isolation of Vietnam. In return for this support, the Soviets were granted access to the Cam Ranh Bay naval base and the Da Nang airfield. This support, however, costs the Soviets dearly: an estimated $1-2 billion annually.

The Chinese have sought to punish Hanoi for China's defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese army during the nasty border war of 1979. Another Chinese goal has been the prevention of Vietnamese expansion into Southeast Asia. To achieve these aims China supported the retreating but still active Pol Pot forces with heavy injections of military equipment and supplies.

The United States and its ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) allies, angry with Hanoi's Soviet-supported expansionism in the region, rejected both the Heng Samrin government and Hanoi's continued presence in Cambodia. The U.S. and ASEAN chose instead to support two factions, one headed by Prince Sihanouk, the other by his former prime minister, Son Sann. These groups had emerged in opposition to Hanoi's military presence and to its client regime. When these two factions entered into an alliance of convenience with Pol Pot, the U.S. and ASEAN found themselves in the peculiar position of supporting diplomatically and with military aid an alliance dominated by Pol Pot's vicious killers.

Until recently all these positions remained stubbornly resistant to change. Two occurrences contributed much to breaking this stalemate. First, new leadership in Hanoi, desirous of promoting better relations with the West in hope of speeding economic growth, indicated a willingness to reach a political solution in Cambodia. Second, the Soviets under Gorbachev articulated a desire to cut back their support for Vietnam in order to improve their relations with China and the U.S. and its ASEAN allies. The Soviets followed up this change of position with successful efforts to encourage the early departure of the Vietnamese from Cambodia.

With these pieces in place, other actors have been reconsidering their positions; recent events and announcements could have hastened the pace of progress toward a resolution of Cambodia's problems. The Vietnamese appear to have withdrawn all of their

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forces and, more importantly, the Chinese have suggested that they might, under unspecified conditions, discontinue their support of Pol Pot. However, the recent student uprisings in China and the Chinese government's reaction to those events have made China's current directions difficult to assess. On the one hand, China may be reluctant at this time to turn against those of its allies, like Pol Pot, that remain supportive. On the other hand, if the U.S. were to change its position, China might be persuaded to withdraw its support for the Khmer Rouge in return for a restoration of pre-Tiananmen Square relations with the U.S.

Even the ASEAN nations' solid support for the Sihanouk-Son Sann coalition appears to be falling apart. Although Thailand's Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhaven has publicly continued Thailand's opposition to the present Cambodian government, he has met privately with Hun Sen. Highlighting this ASEAN split is Lee Kuan Yew's continuing effort to persuade the U.S. to remain constant in its support of Sihanouk. Most recently he argued that the now blunted offensive carried on by the resistance coalition along the Cambodian border might lead to a sudden collapse of the Cambodian government, "allowing the Khmer Rouge to take power." Few observers feel, however, that the current offensive is that threatening. *The Economist* (Oct. 14) has suggested that Hun Sen's strategy may be to let the rebels take territory before launching a counteroffensive.

Despite these generally hopeful signs, several important pieces of a Cambodian settlement are missing. The first of these is that the U.S., though currently reconsidering its position, remains committed to removing the Heng Samrin government and replacing it with one headed by Prince Sihanouk. This despite the prince's commitment to giving the hated Khmer Rouge a role in Cambodia's future. Recently Congress has grown uneasy with both these commitments and there appears to be growing pressure on Secretary of State Baker to redirect U.S. policy.

The current U.S. position is a prescription for ongoing violence and perhaps even a return of the Vietnamese forces. Neither Hanoi nor the present government and people of Cambodia is prepared to accept any arrangement that legitimizes Pol Pot's forces in any way. Should the Sihanouk alliance and particularly the Khmer Rouge show signs of military victory the Vietnamese would surely be asked and being asked would return to Cambodia. Although Hanoi desperately needs and wants bilateral and multilateral aid from the West, they would probably sacrifice such aid if the price were a Cambodia under Khmer Rouge control. A Vietnamese return would provide the excuse the U.S. needs to go on punishing Hanoi. However, any short-range psychological satisfaction gained by such a response must be measured against the loss of the long-range stability that would emerge in time from an American policy which urged Sihanouk to make an agreement with Hun Sen that excluded the Khmer Rouge.

If American policy changes and is successful in persuading Sihanouk to part company with the Khmer Rouge, then a way must be found to guarantee the new Cambodian government against a Pol Pot effort to regain power. Pol Pot's forces are known to be building stocks of military material and with the Vietnamese gone, his army may be the strongest force in Cambodia. In the opinion of most observers, any Cambodia settlement should view with suspicion the protestations of Pol Pot that his role in a future Cambodia will be a useful and peaceful one. A peacekeeping force under either UN or ASEAN auspices could play an important role in suppressing Khmer Rouge ambitions. Ideally, this force should have Chinese troops to insure that the Chinese withdraw support from Pol Pot; Indian forces to balance the Chinese; and a strong contingent from the ASEAN nations as the party with the greatest interest in seeing the Cambodian conflict settled. It is important to note that the supporters of the Sihanouk coalition also perceive the necessity of a peacekeeping force to keep the Khmer Rouge at bay. Lee Kuan Yew recently criticized the Vietnamese for "walking away from Cambodia while refusing to allow an international peacekeeping force to be put in place there."

Finally, powerful incentives for continued regional peace among all the possible participants to a settlement are needed. The Chinese in particular need a self-interest carrot to encourage them to stop punishing Hanoi. One path to furthering political stability in the region is to provide a scheme for greater economic growth and integration in mainland Southeast Asia. A way to accomplish this is to resurrect the long-dormant Mekong River Project first proposed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) in 1957. That project envisioned using the Mekong River for energy and economic development in the region. If the project were to be implemented at the present time, it would need to be revised, giving more attention to greater direct benefits for the Chinese and Vietnamese and taking into account environmental concerns. Given such revisions, all of the nations of the region would stand to gain from this project through both direct economic benefits and the integration and political stability that presumably would follow. Without a powerful incentive like the Mekong River Project, any solution to the Cambodian problem would be only partially successful. □

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SCREEN

BLAND & BETTER THAN BLAND

'IMMEDIATE FAMILY' & 'VALMONT'

Immediate Family is a perfect example of the blanding of America. There's nothing very wrong with this film; it even addresses a serious issue, infertility. It stars Glenn Close, James Woods, and Mary Stuart Masterson. The first two play an upper middle-class, thirtysomething childless couple; Miss Masterson is the young working girl who has put up her child for them to adopt, but who also gets to know them along the way and ironically becomes more "immediate family" than they expected. That she steals the show is partly due to her acting ability, but it also reflects the emotional anorexia of the script.

The film shows the Hollywood marketing drive at its headline-driven worst: it should have been called *Immediate Movie*. The threat of such moviemaking doesn't involve the usual suspects, sex or violence; the threat is overdosing on lite syrup. *Immediate Family* is one of the many recent "home movies" to go (cf. *Baby Boom*, *She's Having a Baby*, or even the current *Dad*); it isn't a film as much as a front for a fad. Directed by Jonathan Kaplan (*The Accused*), it was produced by Lawrence Kasdan and written by Barbara Benedek (who wrote for Kasdan's direction of *The Big Chill*). Hard as this may be to believe, their new collaboration is even slicker than their first. The problems of infertile couples and the ethics of adoption deserve treatment; but, oh, for just an iota of resonance. About the only lasting impression this movie leaves is a nasty taste of class prejudices toward blue-collar parenting and sexuality.

The acting at least gives the movie slight appeal. Masterson has some real fire, which shows even through a screenplay limited to shrugs, half-smiles, and embarrassed acknowledgments. Even with her clichéd material of tough, devil-may-care vulnerability, she does a good turn around the floor to promise more for the future. Her best scene (and the movie's most worthwhile one) is in giving birth; she has a face made to express hard-earned courage. But the most deft touch in the scene is having Woods cut the umbilical cord. Woods—the bravura terror of *Salvador* and *True Believer*—is nicely understated being cast against type.

Glenn Close is not so lucky. In one way, her work here marks a retreat to the angelic wholesomeness of her parts in *The Big Chill* and *The Natural*; gone is the deliciously evil meanness of *Fatal Attraction* and *Dangerous Liaisons*. But what her roles really illustrate is not so much change as confirmation of a cliché: movie women come in two sizes, good/weak and bad/strong. She never gets to play something beyond that structure. Close's career now shows how difficult it is for women to escape type-casting; even stars are limited by the options which producers are ready to offer. In this movie, Masterson is the one who gets to scowl and wear black leather; Close wears her yuppie-mammie smiles and is always shot in soft earthy browns. She isn't even allowed to get mad (her real forte) when Masterson reneges on her contract; "she's too sad," the latter says. But if I have to take a "good" Glenn Close, give me the firebrand with a twist of virtue. If I have to take goodness, give it to me as one finds it in its best exemplars in life, allied to strength. What nonsense am I talking about, though? Such complexity might confuse people. It was poetic justice, I suppose, that I saw this film in a mall.

First things first: *Valmont* is not a remake of *Dangerous Liaisons*. Generally, it tells the same story; tonally, it is a completely different, sometimes better, sometimes weaker film. Its source is not the Broadway play, but the original novel; on the other hand, the film's credits declare it is "loosely based" on Laclos's text. Its new flavor reflects the humanistic vision of the director,

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Milos Forman (twice a big winner at the Oscars with *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Amadeus*), who continues to persist in his faith that nothing human can be wholly vile.

Valmont takes Forman back to the age of Amadeus, pre-French revolutionary Europe; Mozart, conducted again by Neville Marriner, echoes gracefully in its Parisian salons. As in *Liaisons*, there are chateaux aplenty and a costume feast for the eyes. But Forman gets beneath the pretty surface by drawing in urban lowlife; he never sees through one prism only; one scene of a food-buying spree in an open-air market is an astonishingly fresh, vibrant vision of old-world customs. The film ends in a wedding attended by the king, with Forman hinting, for those who know history, at the fate of the beautiful people of this brittle ancien régime.

The major force in the film, as in *Liaisons*, is not the title character, an aristocratic rake, but his ally in seductions, the manipulative Marquise de Meurteuil, here a remarkable discovery. Forman loves to cast less well-known actors in major parts exactly for the freshness of their impact on the audience; for the Marquise, he relies on England's Annette Benning, who serves the purpose perfectly. Benning brings to the role different skills and glamour than Glenn Close did in *Liaisons*. Benning is a lithe, visual stunner; her gowns have the right light grace of the 1780s; in one elegant, authentic chinoiserie bathrobe she's at her glamorous best and moral worst. Benning doesn't rage as colorfully as Close, but is better at wit and mischief. In the early scenes, she is also shown enduring betrayal in love; her revenge plans against the world are given full motive. In line with Forman's attempt to humanize monsters (cf. Salieri), his monsters are always first shown to be human.

Forman also uses minor actors wonderfully. Jeffrey Jones, using the same gift for personifying the stiff pomp of his emperor in *Amadeus*, is fine as the lover who betrays Benning; the elderly Fabia Drake (sometimes on *Miss Marple*) plays Valmont's elderly aunt and gives a lesson in crafty professionalism. At first almost senile, she comes on as a strong, shrewd observer, with a gem-like final gesture that seals Forman's claim that something good can even come of evil. Surprisingly, *Valmont* is a better, deeper version of "immediate family." Forman won't bow to the god Irony.

Still, this is no masterpiece. Meg Tilly competently plays the innocent young married woman seduced by Valmont, but lacks the radiance of Michelle Pfeiffer in *Liaisons*. England's Colin Firth plays Valmont well, but the part is vaguely written. Forman tries to make Firth the movie's center, but forgets to give the character enough of one himself. From the beginning of *Valmont*, he is a rake searching for something better; in *Liaisons*, he only discovers values very late. As awkward as that was, the alternative isn't better: watching a character wrestle with equivocations is often tedious. Here you want to scream, "fish or cut bait." The trick, which Forman misses, was to get Valmont to express conflict but without seeming like a paralyzed, Hamlet-like pre-Romantic.

Critics will constantly compare this film with *Liaisons*. Beware of any who overrate its faults, which are real, without an honest discussion of the ideological differences between the two movies. Ideology plays a heavy role in criticism, which expresses judgments but also often masks them. Forman will probably come in for some rough treatment because he has humanized, at times even sentimentalized, Laclos's novel. But this is only another way of saying his critics buy the cynical, ultra-ironic ideology which is the intellectual black hole of our age and which brightened the luster of *Liaisons*. Forman, having survived the mid-twentieth century in Eastern Europe, doesn't know the luxury of not giving a damn. One can only respect his blithe earnestness about caring.

TOM O'BRIEN

STAGE

FAULTY FAMILIES

'RAPTURE' & 'ANTHONY ROSE'

The sound of shotguns can be heard offstage during the final scene of the first act of David Hare's *The Secret Rapture* playing at the Barrymore Theatre in New York. When one of the characters grumbles that he had forgotten that country-house England spent its weekends slaughtering innocent animals, his remarks are more than an explanation of the sounds for the audience. The grumbler is a young artist who has just helped sacrifice his company and his boss—Isobel, the woman he loves—to money interests who will destroy the integrity of their design firm by smothering it in the platitudes of financial growth. He may not like to think so, but he has thus allied himself with the weekend hunters, as Isobel, the play's protagonist, makes clear with the first-act curtain line, "The guns are getting nearer." Add that the engulfing interests are represented by Isobel's sister and her brother-in-law, and it becomes clear that *The Secret Rapture* is another mixture of the psychological and the political, recalling earlier Hare plays like *Knuckle* (1974), *Plenty* (1978), and *A Map of the World* (1983).

There is often a difficulty with Hare heroines. For example, is the protagonist of *Plenty* an idealist wrecked by society or simply a very destructive woman? In *Rapture* Hare wants to avoid that kind of ambiguity—as Benedict Nightingale indicates in an interview piece with the playwright (*New York Times*, October 22)—by insisting on Isobel's goodness and concentrating on the way it is received. "I've noticed that goodness tends to make people shifty, and makes those with bad consciences feel judged even when they're not being judged at all," says Hare, who makes that point in *Rapture*—perhaps more often than necessary—by having the brittle sister, the alcoholic mother-in-law, and the rejected lover react to unvoiced criticism.

However tantalizing as a character, Isobel never achieves the force, the presence of those who surround her. Her desire to withdraw, to find a quiet place (the play begins with her sitting alone in her dead father's bedroom), and the restraint which

(Continued on page 676)

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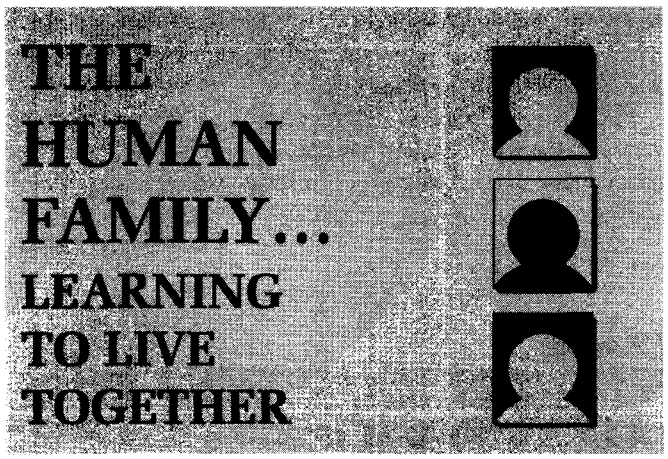

Books for Children and Young Adults

The following titles have been selected from among the many published during 1988-1989 to cover a wide range of ages, interests and readability. Those books have been listed which seem best to portray relationships among people of different origins, races and religions, and which depict their varied backgrounds. The list is the result of agreement by a representative committee of the best in the field for children and young adults. The following selection from the complete list is presented by the publishers named below.

Always to Remember: The Story of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, *by Brent Ashabranner. Photographs by Jennifer A. Ashabranner. Putnam, 1988. $14.95*

The story of the people behind the building of the memorial to the 58,156 service men and women who lost their lives while serving in the Vietnam War. (10-14)

Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave, *by Virginia Hamilton. Alfred A. Knopf, 1988. $11.95*

The dramatic account of a young black runaway slave placed on trial in Boston in 1854, when abolitionists sought to prevent his return to his former owners under the controversial Fugitive Slave Act. The passions and issues that led to the Civil War are recreated vividly here. (12 and up)

The Arizona Kid, *by Ron Koertge. Little, Brown & Co., 1988. $14.95*

Billy was thrilled to spend the summer in Tucson with his uncle who found him a job at the racetrack. He learned a lot that summer in Arizona about life, AIDS, and romance. (12 and up)

Born Different: The Amazing Stories of Some Very Special People, *by Frederick Drimmer, Atheneum, 1988. $12.95*

The names "peerless prodigies," "strange people," "freaks" are circus performers for most of us. Their acts thrill us and we often feel revulsion when we look at the bearded lady or at the man with flippers for arms. But has anyone ever wondered what the private lives of any of these very different people are like? Drimmer takes the readers to the backstage life of Tom Thumb, Chang and Eng, the original Siamese twins, and to John Merrick, the elephant man, and others. (12 and up)

The Burning Questions of Bingo Brown, *by Betsy Byars. Viking Kestrel, 1988. $11.95*

A sensitive sixth grader worries about falling in love, the possible bully next door and the problems of the adults around him. A humorous and heartwarming study of coming of age in a world full of often confusing people. (10-14)

A Circle Unbroken, *by Sollace Hotze. Clarion Books, 1988. $13.95*

Captured at ten and abused by a renegade Indian brave, then raised by a kindly Sioux chief as his daughter, Kata Wi, Rachel Porter is returned at age 17 to her white family in Missouri. Her stern, angry father burns her Indian clothes and demands that she put away all thoughts of her Sioux life. But for Rachel-Kata Wi it is a difficult struggle discovering who she is and where she truly belongs. (12 and up)

Crusher Is Coming, *written and illustrated by Bob Graham. Viking Kestrel, 1988. $11.95*

Peter wants everything to be just right when Crusher, the school's star athlete, comes over to his house. But Crusher is fascinated with Peter's baby sister, and Peter learns that even tough guys have soft sides like everybody else. (3-7)

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Crutches, *by Peter Härtling. Translated from German by Elizabeth D. Crawford. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1988. $12.95*

Thirteen-year-old Thomas was alone in Vienna at the end of WW II and had no idea where to go to find his mother. He impulsively followed a one-legged man on crutches who overcame his own troubles to help Thomas through a terrible time. (12 and up)

A Family Project, *by Sarah Ellis. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1988. $12.95*

When 11-year-old Jessica learns that her mother is expecting, she shares the excitement with her whole family. But the baby dies unexpectedly and the family must learn to come together to share a new emotion: their deep sense of loss. (10-14)

Finding a Way: Living with Exceptional Brothers and Sisters, *by Maxine B. Rosenberg, with photography by George Ancona. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1988. $11.95*

This book helps brothers and sisters learn about living with siblings who may have disabilities. Children need to learn that problems are not their fault and that they can have a lot of fun with the "exceptional" members of their families. (8-12)

Follow the Drinking Gourd, *written and illustrated by Jeanette Winter. Alfred A. Knopf, 1988. $14.95*

Before the Civil War, an old sailor named Peg Leg Joe works from plantation to plantation and secretly teaches the slaves the song about the Drinking Gourd in the sky that will lead them to freedom. This exciting picture book shows how black and white together made the Underground Railroad work during the days of slavery in the Old South. (6-10)

The Good Times Are Killing Me, *by Lynda Barry. Real Comet Press, 1988. $16.95*

Edna Arkins reflects humorously on her home life, her school, and her on-again, off-again friendship with Bonna, a black neighbor, in their racially tense neighborhood. Paintings by the author are included. (14 and up)

Grandpa's Face, *by Eloise Greenfield. Illustrated by Floyd Cooper. Philomel Books, 1988. $13.95*

Tamika's grandfather is an actor, but one day, while she watches him practicing, he makes such a mean face that he frightens her away. She is so upset that he must take her on one of their "walk-talks" to reassure her that he would never make such a face at his granddaughter whom he loves so much. (3-7)

Her Own Song, *by Ellen Howard. Atheneum, 1988. $12.95*

Mellie, growing up on the west coast in the early part of this century, discovers that she has spent part of her childhood with a Chinese family before her adoption by a Caucasian couple and begins a journey towards respect for other cultures—and for herself. (10-14)

Hotel Boy, *by Curt and Gita Kaufman. Photographs by Curt Kaufman. Atheneum, 1988. $11.95*

Henri is just like all the other children in his class—except that his family does not have a place of their own. This non-sensationalistic photo essay describes a five-year-old boy's life in one of New York City's welfare hotels. (6-10)

Selected by...
Janet Austin, Media Specialist/Librarian, Clifton High School, Clifton, New Jersey
Christine Behrmann, Children's Materials Specialist, Office of Children's Services, New York Public Library, New York, New York
Joseph Benkovitz, Librarian, Springfield Gardens High School, New York
Michael Patrick Hearn, Columbia University, Author, Critic
Ellen V. LiBretto, Young Adult Consultant, Queens Borough Public Library, Jamaica, New York
Karlan Sick, Young Adult Specialist, New York Public Library, Bronx, New York
Mary Jane Tacchi, Assistant Coordinator, Young Adult Services, New York Public Library, New York, New York

The Igloo, *by Charlotte and David Yue. Houghton Mifflin, 1988. $13.95*

How do people live where there is incredibly intense cold, no trees, few animals, endless fields of snow and no sunlight for six months at a time? This is a fascinating account of the everyday lives of the Eskimos, a unique and highly ingenious people, who have survived for thousands of years in perhaps the harshest climate on earth. (10-14)

Inspirations: Stories About Women Artists, *by Leslie Sills. Albert Whitman Co., 1989. $16.95*

Colorful art reproductions accompany the profiles of four important women in modern art: Georgia O'Keeffe, Frida Kahlo, Alice Neel and Faith Ringgold. Their lives and work are very different but they share the common bond of persevering in the face of obstacles and in being faithful to their own individual artistic vision. (10-14)

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Least of All, *by Carol Purdy. Illustrated by Tim Arnold. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1988. $11.95*

Raven Hannah may seem to be the least of all in her family, but she can give every one of them one of the greatest gifts of all. While churning butter in the kitchen, she has taught herself how to read the family Bible and promises to teach Grandmamma, Papa, Mamma, and her five brothers how to, too. (6-10)

Little by Little: A Writer's Education, *by Jean Little. Viking Kestrel, 1988. $11.95*

A noted author tells the story of her childhood in Taiwan and Canada, weaving the concerns of a budding writer into a dispassionate picture of what it's like to be visually impaired. (12 and up)

Makeba: My Story, *by Miriam Makeba w/James Hall. NAL Penguin, 1988. $8.95*

This native South African singer who has known incredible success, personal tragedy, lost loves and political violence shares her fascinating story and reveals a strong woman. (14 and up)

Margaret Mead, The World Was Her Family, *by Susan Saunders. Illustrated by Ted Lewin. Puffin Books, 1988. $3.50*

Margaret Mead spent her life studying humankind. As an anthropologist she believed that anthropologists must use their knowledge "to help human beings live, without war, on one planet." (8-12)

Memory, *by Margaret Mahy. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1988. $13.95*

Nineteen-year-old Jonny did not trust his memory of his sister's accidental death when they were children and set out after a few too many beers to find Bonny, a girl who had been there, too. Instead, he found an old woman suffering from Alzheimer's disease pushing a cart through a parking lot in the middle of the night who mistook him for someone she once knew. Her memory problems puzzled Jonny so much that he found himself involved trying to help her. (12 and up)

The Most Beautiful Place in the World, *by Ann Cameron. Drawings by Thomas B. Allen. Alfred A. Knopf, 1988. $10.95*

Abandoned by his mother, Juan, seven, makes a good life living with his grandmother and helping out by shining shoes. Still, he does have one dream: to go to school. A memorable picture of a young boy working towards a better life in his beloved Guatemalan home. (7-10)

New Americans: An Oral History, *by Al Santoli. Viking, 1988. $19.95*

Eighteen new immigrants tell gripping, often heartbreaking stories about their departures from their homelands and the trials of assimilation they face in the U.S.A. (12 and up)

The New Americans: Immigrant Life In Southern California, *by Ulli Steltzer. New Sage Press, 1988. $34.95 hard cover; $24.95 paperback*

Black and white photos of new immigrants, from the world over, now living in Southern California, tell the story of the contrasts they find in adapting to their new land and culture. (12 and up)

The Not-So-Wicked Stepmother, *by Lizi Boyd. NAL Puffin, 1989. $3.95 paperback*

Hessie learns that her father's new wife is not mommy, but neither is she a wicked stepmother. And when the stepmother bakes a surprise cake, it tastes very good. This is a story of a revealing summer visit. (3-7)

Out From This Place, *by Joyce Hansen. Walker & Co., 1988. $13.95*

At the height of the Civil War, Easter joins a group of other runaway slaves who escape to an island off the coast of South Carolina where they work for pay and the promise that they will be able to buy the land. At the end of the war, however, the hopes of the former slaves appear to be crushed, but for the first time in her life Easter has some control over her future and must decide where she wants to go and what she wants to do. (12 and up)

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Park's Quest, *by Katherine Paterson. Dutton/Lodestar, 1988. $12.95*

Park's dream of finding out about his father, killed in Vietnam, leads him to travel, alone, to meet his father's family and a Vietnamese half-sister he never knew he had. (10-14)

Playing Marbles, *written and illustrated by Julie Brinckloe. Morrow Junior Books, 1988. $12.95*

At first the two boys want to play marbles all by themselves, but the girl wants to play, too. And they are glad that they all do. She proves to be an excellent player, and they all look forward to their next match tomorrow. (3-7)

Rescue: The Story of How Gentiles Saved Jews in the Holocaust, *by Milton Meltzer. Harper & Row, 1988. $12.89*

The author recounts dozens of stories of gentiles who risked their lives to help Jews escape the Holocaust. Nuns, farmers, a countess, a librarian, peasants, each story reaffirms the need of individuals to stand for goodness in an evil time. (10 and up)

Sea Swan, *by Kathryn Lasky. Illustrated by Catherine Stock. Macmillan, 1988. $13.95*

At 75, Elzibah turns her life around, learning to swim, snorkle, and explore new worlds. She shares her adventures in loving letters to her grandchildren. (7-10)

Somehow Tenderness Survives: Stories of Southern Africa, *selected by Hazel Rochman. Harper & Row. 1988. $12.95*

Whether about a young woman hiding in a public toilet so she won't be discovered in an all-white district, or about a boy watching as his father is dragged off in the middle of the night, these stories humanize apartheid with vivid, moving, sometimes shocking glimpses of what it is like to live where racism is the law. (14 and up)

Storm in the Night, *by Mary Stolz. Illustrated by Pat Cummings. Harper & Row, 1988. $12.95*

As a thunderstorm puts the lights out, Thomas and his grandfather—and their cat, Ringo—give each other comfort and talk about darkness and life. (6-10)

To Life, *by Ruth Minsky Sender. Macmillan, 1988. $14.95*

Released from a German concentration camp at the end of WW II, Ruth made her way home to Poland in a fruitless search for her family. In this tale of hope and survival, a sequel to *The Cage*, she marries, discovers family, and survives the DP camps to come to America and a new life. (14 and up)

Touch Wood: A Girlhood in Occupied France, *By Renée Roth-Hano. Four Winds, 1988. $15.95*

The autobiographical story of two sisters sheltered in a French convent during World War II makes an exciting tale of everyday heroism. (12 and up)

We Adopted You, Benjamin Ku, *by Linda Walvoord Girard. Illustrated by Linda Shute. Albert Whitman, 1989. $10.50*

Benjamin, adopted from Korea by American parents, tells about his everyday life and feelings about adoption in funny and believable terms. (7-10)

Winnie Mandela: Life of Struggle, *by Jim Haskins. Putnam's Sons, 1988. $14.95*

Follows the life of the woman who married a prominent leader for racial equality in South Africa and then became an activist in that field herself. Black and white photos. (12 and up)

For the complete "Human Family" booklist write to:
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(Continued from page 671)

she brings to even her most assertive gestures make her a character for whom action is reaction. For this reason, a distance remains between Isobel and her family, her lover and, unfortunately, the audience. Not even Blair Brown's attractive performance can quite bridge the empathetic divide.

We are to assume that Isobel, who seems a simple character, is in fact a complex one, one who recognizes that the connections among human beings are never easy to define. Her sister Marion has been confused and hurt by a world that she cannot understand—as she says late in the play—and she has chosen to reduce the intricacies of life to encompassing formulas. She has used anger and aggression to impose a bogus rationality on the irrationalities of life. Her choice is a political one. She is an official in the Conservative government and, as Frances Conroy wonderfully plays her, she dresses, speaks, and moves like Margaret Thatcher at her iciest. She is not a parody, but an evocation of the prime minister which gives a clear indication of Marion's pretend sense of her self and what unquestioning assurance means to contemporary England. Her husband is a born-again Christian who talks of the comfort of Jesus, but whose Christian Industries embraces and then abandons Isobel and her company.

Nightingale says that Hare wants to "draw attention to the unpretentious private good which, he feels, has somehow managed to endure in an increasingly tough, predatory Britain." Yet, does it endure? The character certainly does not, since Isobel is killed by her lover. At the end of the play, Marion has put aside her Thatcher suit for a gentler black dress of mourning and has restored her father's living room as it was when he died. Perhaps Isobel's goodness has broken through Marion's shell. An invigorating martyrdom? The title describes the ecstasy of that moment when a nun is united with Christ; yet Hare tells Nightingale that he chose it "because it's about death." A religious element would be a surprise in Hare's work unless it were metaphorical, a psychological or political discovery by Marion. Death? Or a *living* room? The brother-in-law, who says he has been out of touch with Jesus recently, describes the room as a copy of what it was, an uninspirited restoration. At the end, Marion cries out for her sister to come home, but the audience never knows whether or in what form there is an answer.

The Political Meaning of Christianity
An Interpretation
Glenn Tinder

Glenn Tinder clarifies the complex relationship between Christianity and politics. He argues that Christianity implies not a particular kind of society but rather a political attitude and posture on the part of individuals that will enable them to embrace society and undertake programs of political and social action.

"Bound to attract serious attention, Tinder's brilliantly articulated argument illuminates our staggering social problems in a fresh and inspiring way."
—*Kirkus Reviews*

$29.95

Louisiana State University Press
Baton Rouge 70893

While David Hare drives his psychological/political vehicle to an uncertain destination, Jules Feiffer, who shares Hare's obsessions with psychology and politics, shows that he prefers to run on two tracks. In interviews in the Philadelphia Inquirier (October 15 and October 22), Feiffer talked mostly about politics, but in his new play, Anthony Rose, which had its premiere at the Philadelphia Festival Theatre for New Plays, he is once again enmeshed in the parents-and-children concatenation that last engrossed him on stage in Grown Ups (1981).

This time, his protagonist is a father and a successful Broadway playwright. Anthony Rose turns up in Kansas City, where a revival of a twenty-five-year-old play of his, *The Parent Lesson*, is in rehearsal, and proceeds to rewrite it, making the father, who long ago abandoned his children, into a sympathetic character, and the grown sons, his victims, into his cruel accusers. He also drives away the actor signed to play the father and takes over the role himself; he reduces the director to the stuttering boy who could never face his own disapproving father; and wins the woman whom the original script assigned to one of the sons.

As one would expect, Feiffer's play is knowledgeably amusing about the ways of actors and writers, the process of creating and staging plays, but its primary concern is with the family as inevitable trap. In the next-to-last scene, Rose reveals that he has abandoned his own (ungrateful?) family and has tried with no success to find a substitute for them in theater after theater across the country. Now he announces to the assembled players, "you are my family," and, as the director takes us stammeringly into the rehearsal, we see that a new disaster is aborning. It is a very effective moment, a fine open-ended ending that leaves what is coming to the audience's imagination.

Unfortunately, the play does not end there. In a final scene, set three years later in a television studio in Hollywood, we meet most of the principals again, learn specifically and unnecessarily what actually happened, and get satirical comment on the mock-seriousness of concerned TV that begins to pull us toward the political Feiffer. Up to this point, Feiffer's comedy has fed his serious theme; in the last scene, that theme—although still visible—is obscured by a fairly obvious guying of television. If, like Anthony Rose, Feiffer decides to rewrite, I hope he drops the final scene.

GERALD WEALES

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Critics' choices for Christmas

Emil Antonucci

EMIL ANTONUCCI, *an instructor at Parsons School of Design in New York City, is currently the design consultant to the NYC Campaign Finance Board and the NYC Charter Revision Commission. He redesigned* Commonweal *in 1965 and 1987.*

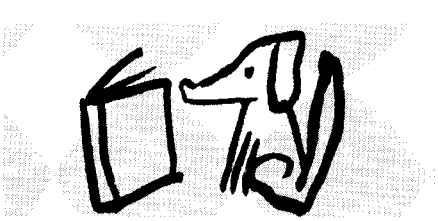
Pity the poor artist. He has seen everything; more images in a year than Michelangelo in a lifetime. Every period in the history of art excavated, the most obscure minor artist out of the past presented to him on platters of glossy books. His brush, poised above the blank canvas, trembles under the weight of all this history. Where shall he enter the insane cloverleaf of conflicting trends. The relationships of art have been drawn in so many intersecting lines of thought that, for most of us, they form a grid more like a cage than a map.

Anne Hollander, author of the brilliant book on the image of the body in western art, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Viking, 1978), provides in her new book, *Moving Pictures* (Alfred A. Knopf, $22.95, 512 pp.) not only a superb account of the complex processes of North European art and its audience, but a thesis that knits up a good deal of raveled ideas and images—shuttling back and forth across the great contradictions of contemporary art: classic-romantic, high art and low, the original work and its reproduction, private and public vision. Certainly no other book on art appearing this year provides as much intellectual excitement and sheer visual nourishment or a greater breadth of learning and insight. It is a book I have been living in for some weeks and it has displaced all other art books in my thinking.

The basic premise of the book is the link between the tradition of North European painting and the modern cinema. It is an inspired format for dealing with the complex task of understanding, not to mention producing, art in the late twentieth century, a task that seems to me to have become increasingly desperate. "Where do we go from here?" has never had a more poignant ring for the artist. The cinema is the vehicle for bringing the visions and artistic strategies of the past into private life, permitting even the most untutored individual a personal participation in art. The tradition of North European art and the modern cinema both work by "using optical experience to stand for psychological experience; to mirror and engage the working of the viewer's soul rather than to gratify his conscious understanding."

The book provides rich possibilities for reconciling the esoteric agendas of the art world with those of vast, mass audiences of present-day society. I am not suggesting that Hollander is even hinting at a program for the future, but I think anyone trying to formulate the art or taste of the future will find this book essential reading. The strategy of using the past as a springboard to the future is an old tradition in the arts, the Renaissance being the obvious example.

Whether you are an artist or student of our culture, you will find the book valuable, rich in detail, lucidly written, and bravely committed to seeing the world of images whole, without pretension or prejudice as to high or low art. It is for me a healing book because of its willingness to see art as encompassing all of us, not just a favored few; art breaks down the cultural fences that separate us and helps to invent a culture that brings us together.



Holmes Rolston, III

HOLMES ROLSTON, III, *professor of philosophy at Colorado State University, has written* Environmental Ethics *(Temple),* Philosophy Gone Wild *(Promethus), and* Science and Religion: A Critical Survey *(Temple and Random House).*

The endangered earth is *Time*'s planet of the year for 1989, and authors are voicing increasing concern for the natural world. Recent environmental titles run into the hundreds, some biological, others economic, social, or political, and across a spectrum from the technical to the popular. On philosophical and theological levels, several dozen titles have appeared in the last two years.

A good place to start is with Roderick Frazier Nash's *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (University of Wisconsin, $27.50, 290 pp.). Nash, a professor of history and environmental studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, also author of the classic *Wilderness and the American Mind*, traces the recent history of expanding ethical concern. What sorts of things count morally? Humans, animals, trees, flowers, endangered species, ecosystems, rivers, earth? The answers that Nash surveys, diverse in many ways, nevertheless insist almost unanimously that moral obligation does not stop with duties to other humans.

J. Baird Callicott's *In Defense of the Land Ethic* (State University of New York, $10.95 paper, cloth $35.50, 325 pp.) ably defends the ethic that Aldo Leopold launched a generation ago in his *Sand County Almanac*: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community." Callicott, a philosopher at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point,

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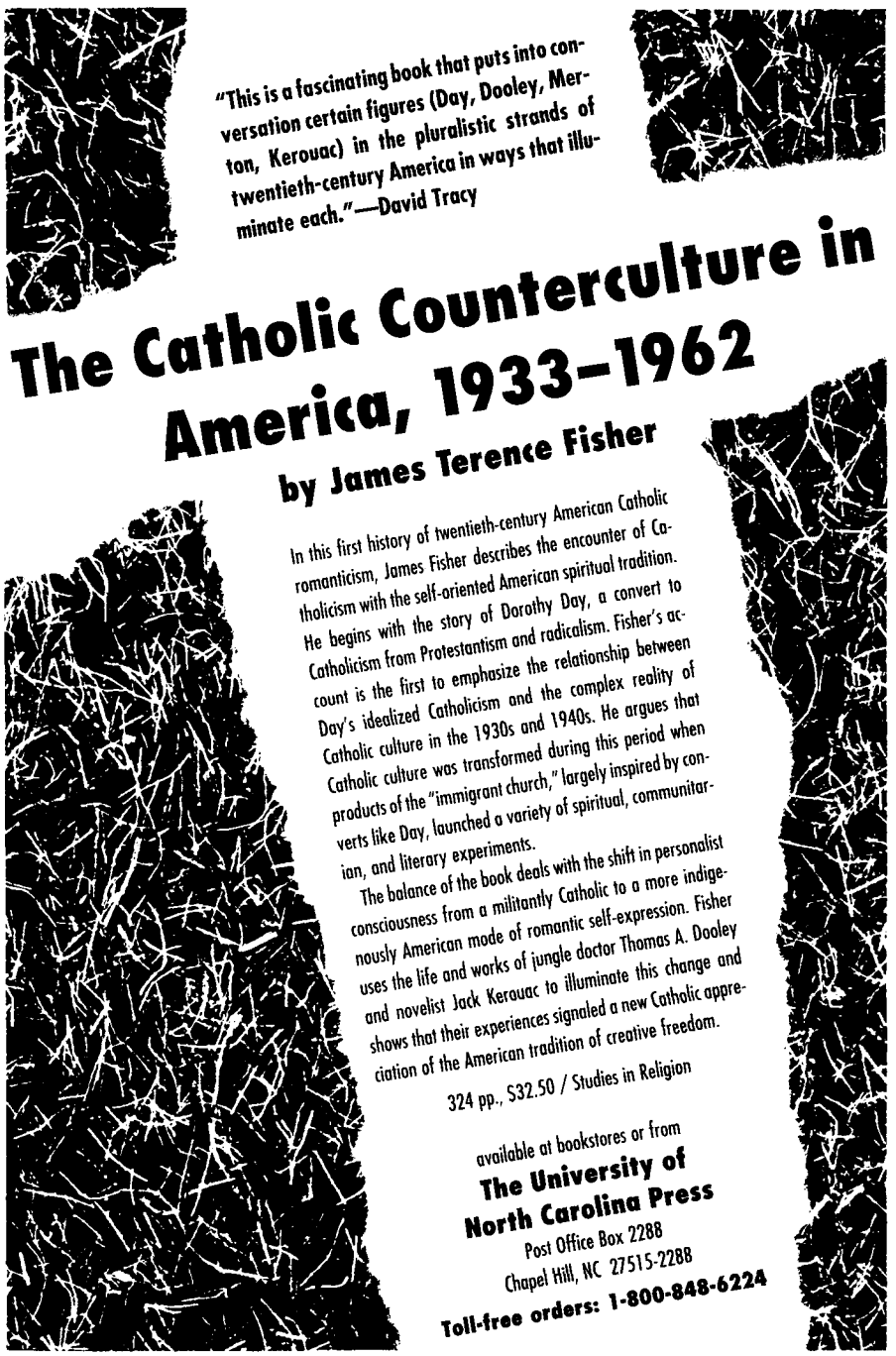
builds on innate human sentiments that can yield at once the fullest quality of human life and appropriate love for nature.

Richard Cartwright Austin is a Presbyterian minister who has devoted his career to defending people in their natural environments. In *Hope for the Land: Nature in the Bible* (John Knox, $12.95, 262 pp.), Austin interprets nature through the categories of liberation, creativity, Sabbath ecology, the Fall, and ecological visions. God's covenant is with the Hebrews and Christians and also with the land. God creates, and inspires creativity in his creation, both in nature and in human life. But, alas, humans fail. Biblical redemption included an ecological vision; when people are made whole the land they inhabit is restored to its own integrity.

Jay B. McDaniel's *God and the Pelicans: A Theology of Reverence for Life* (Westminster/John Knox, $11.95, 192 pp.) develops a sensitivity to all living beings, especially those who suffer. McDaniel begins with a pelican chick, abused by its older sibling, and, like most juveniles in nature, doomed to die an early death. Using the insights of process theology, he goes on to ponder the agonies of the creative process in which individuals are used and cast aside. McDaniel shows deep compassion for the hungry, the lost, the forgotten, and the victimized, both animals and persons. In this struggling toward something higher, the divine spirit is present.

The saddest of these books is Bill McKibben's *The End of Nature* (Random House, $19.95, 226 pp.). McKibben, a writer for the *New Yorker* magazine, fears that global warming, a consequence of the world's industrialization, will wreak profound changes in the natural order. We may not fully realize what we have done until "our sense of nature as eternal and separate is washed away." Unfortunately, the evidence is already accumulating that he is right. Everything, everywhere "bears the permanent stamp of man," and this "seems infinitely sad."

On earth, only humans are ethical agents; but, clearly the nonhuman world is high on the ethical agenda for the next decade, even for the next millennium.


"This is a fascinating book that puts into conversation certain figures (Day, Dooley, Merton, Kerouac) in the pluralistic strands of twentieth-century America in ways that illuminate each."—David Tracy
The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933–1962
by James Terence Fisher
In this first history of twentieth-century American Catholic romanticism, James Fisher describes the encounter of Catholicism with the self-oriented American spiritual tradition. He begins with the story of Dorothy Day, a convert to Catholicism from Protestantism and radicalism. Fisher's account is the first to emphasize the relationship between Day's idealized Catholicism and the complex reality of Catholic culture in the 1930s and 1940s. He argues that Catholic culture was transformed during this period when products of the "immigrant church," largely inspired by converts like Day, launched a variety of spiritual, communitarian, and literary experiments.
The balance of the book deals with the shift in personalist consciousness from a militantly Catholic to a more indigenously American mode of romantic self-expression. Fisher uses the life and works of jungle doctor Thomas A. Dooley and novelist Jack Kerouac to illuminate this change and shows that their experiences signaled a new Catholic appreciation of the American tradition of creative freedom.
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Karen Sue Smith

KAREN SUE SMITH *is an associate editor of* Commonweal *and directs the Iona Center for Pastoral Liturgy at Iona College, New Rochelle, N.Y.*

Everyone should read Reynolds Price, who writes with substance and without cynicism. His epitaph for a family friend, Mac Thorton, aptly describes the spirit of Price's own fiction: "consuming life gladly and giving it back." Price's honest gratitude toward life allows him to draw characters whose decency, faith in God, and engagement in the ordinary enterprise of family-making (which for him means including neighbors and friends as well as kin) exude power and beauty. Price has learned that life matters; that it should be attended to; and that fiction, as a reflection of life, should be usable. And he knows from whom he has learned all this: from the subjects of his memoir, *Clear Pictures* (Atheneum, $19.95, 304 pp.)—his parents, an aunt who suffered dark depressions, a cousin of his

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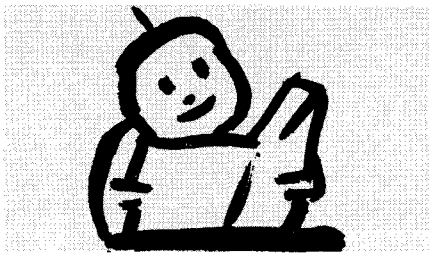

father's, a neighbor who contributed to his education, and other mentors.

Don't think such wholesomeness produces naive prose. Far from it. Price's recognition of evil—racism, in this book—is what makes his preoccupation with goodness so important. Take Price's father, Will, history's third best comedian "after Chaplin and Keaton." Despite Will's clowning, it is his serious innocence that is particularly appealing. When Price, who has begun to notice that paintings of Jesus vary considerably, asks Will whether there is a photograph of Jesus' actual face, Will assumes there must be and answers, "Yes darling, they have his real picture in student Bibles." Price is too young to know better. The deeper truth about Will, though, is that he is "no chattering fundamentalist, but a silent wrestler in the scalding dark," a dark the author later describes in detail.

Of his mother, Elizabeth, Price writes: she'd "braid tighter our separate strands till at last she was half-blind, alone in a big house, in the grip of a pain so constant that she finally said to me, 'If I thought an icepick could find that nerve, I'd plunge it deep in my eye this minute and gouge till I killed it.'"

With strength, delicacy, and humor, Price describes his teen-age encounters with the contralto Marian Anderson; his developing skills in drawing and painting, music, and poetry; his English teacher ("this woman plainly knew that poetry mattered like blood or money"); his appreciation for the human body; and his fortune to have had wonderful mentors, black and white.

More reserved, but still charming and instructive is Robert MacNeil's memoir, *Wordstruck* (Viking, $18.95, 230 pp.)—an account of MacNeil's growing love affair with the English language. It contains enough John Ciardi-like forays into literature to persuade the lukewarm reader to head for the library.

If you have ever thought of trading in your fast-paced urban lifestyle for life on a farm, read Terry Silber's *A Small Farm in Maine* (Houghton-Mifflin, $17.95, 211 pp.)—a detailed, sensible chronicle of how it's done: overcome romantic notions; learn planting, growing, and marketing techniques, as well as the mail order business; cope with storms, fire, and recurring doubts, the primary one being, "Do you want to work this hard for the rest of your life?"

Like me, naturalist Ann Haymond Zwinger loves the Southwestern deserts. In *The Mysterious Lands* (E.P. Dutton, $22.50, 388 pp.), she respectfully explores the Chihuahuan, Sonoran, Mojave, and Nevada Basin deserts, describing geological changes, flora, and fauna—from the ancient disappearance of a lake to the burrowing of a grouse—with precision and grace: "small King's Dalea bushes scraggle along and under the ground, purple-flowered, ropes of reddish roots alternately exposed and buried" and "where the tufa erodes away, frond patterns ice the granite surface or form imbricated patterns on the sides of the rock, leaving lacy dendritic tapestries." Read it and you'll hear the desert call.

Sally Fitzgerald

SALLY FITZGERALD *is a co-editor of* Mystery & Manners: Flannery O'Connor's Occasional Prose, *editor of her letters,* The Habit of Being, *and the Library of America's* O'Connor, *her collected works.*

Three books—variations on the theme of breakthrough to higher levels of spiritual consciousness—commanded my lingering attention this past year. Their authors, two European and one American, all concern themselves, in very divers ways and settings, with lives long unexamined by the living: men of high position, so hedged about by circumstance (and degrees of pomp) and the outward reassurance of their essential places in the religious and social functioning of their worlds that they have lost all sense of the dormant state of their own souls, and of sacred vocations vitiated in important ways. Two are priests; the third an emperor, demi-deified for most of his life, but now doomed, together with

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his family and the old order he represents.

All three authors, performing their individual rites of spring, dramatize the process of dry seed being slowly warmed to life (by the love that moves the sun and all the stars?) and prepared for fruition, whether in death or new forms of life. Patiently, day by day, the two priests are wakened to self-awareness and rediscovery of their real vocation, while the ruler is brought to understand and accept the final obligations imposed by his own vocation.

The Sea Remains (Crossroad, $13.95, 118 pp., translated by Robert A. Donahue, Jr. and Joseph Cunneen) by the late Jean Sulivan (acclaimed in France as the most important Catholic writer in that country since Bernanos) is a beautiful and complex novella set in Spain. The protagonist is an aged cardinal, retired to a remote fishing village. Apparently fixed in his amber mask, he nevertheless retains the inward essence to respond, with humor and a flair for holy scandal, to what he learns from his long, thoughtful tramps along the seacoast, and from his encounters there, by choosing to end his days in a prison cell, joyfully loosed from his cardinal sins of remoteness, abstract legalism, and pride, to which any prince of the church might be tempted as he flawlessly, if aridly, executes his official duties over the years. Even more importantly, the old man's gesture bestows life and freedom on a kind of secular "holy family," for love of whom he forgoes his own, as he confers his ring of office on the young revolutionary he has come to understand and respect. Sulivan's voice is very fine in the singing of this tale.

In *Wheat That Springeth Green* (Knopf, $17.95, 335 pp.) the exploits of a lesser ecclesiastic—but still, venerably, "a priest forever"—are sung by J.F. Powers, Homer of the American Rectory Wars, whose heroes contend with various forces of gravity to which the clerical spirit is subject: lassitude, loneliness and, in some instances, the consolations of malt liquor. Not that Powers regards them as warriors. He sees them rather as gallant runners in a sack race of a cosmic kind, in which they lurch along, repeatedly tripping, falling, but getting up to carry on until they can stumble across the finish line in what we ought to cheer as triumph. In his most recent novel, wonderful to have after so long a silence, Powers again turns his awful attention to the rectory, and perfectly renders the presiding shepherd of an affluent American parish (St. Francis and St. Clare!) as he stifles under the trivial concerns that confine his soul as though in a seed case buried in winter ground. Father Joe Hackett's largely absurd life proceeds, detail by inexorable detail, exactly noted and recounted by a master of comedy (which is to say, of matters of the most serious moment), here at his best. When Joe finally puts forth the shoot that reveals the life lodged in him after all, his impulse toward growth, like the cardinal's, is expressed in the protection of a defiant young nay-sayer he has come to see is right in his conscientious protest. Perhaps our prescient artists have begun to see around a corner, glimpsing a greening field of increasing ecclesiastical recognition of the spiritual demands in the political realm, heretofore somewhat scanted.

The revolutionaries in *Searching for the Emperor*, by Italian novelist and poet Roberto Pazzi (Knopf, $17.95, 196 pp.),

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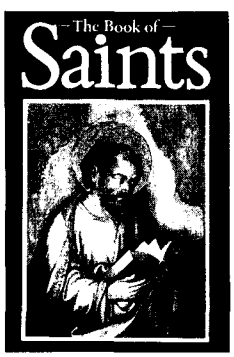

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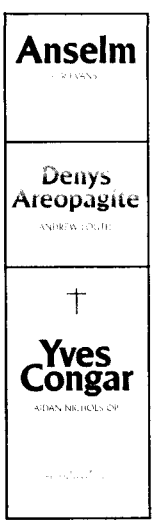

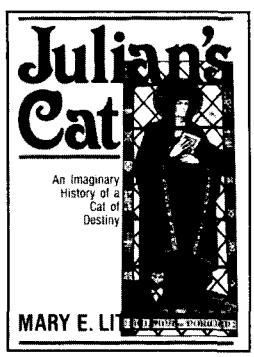

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are a harder lot: absolutely ruthless, and prepared for any amount of bloodshed needed to end a long-entrenched regime, itself historically steeped in blood. We already know that they will slaughter the Romanovs huddled in the modest house in Ekaterinburg, and, apart from the poetic license of a metaphorical gentling of the mode of death, Pazzi offers no new "actual" account of events already recorded as best they can be by professional historians in an oft-told tale. He proposes instead a fiction-writer's kind of truth—what in truth *could* have happened to this sad family at this pass in their lives—and for the most part makes us believe it, even at its most asiatically fabulous, but most especially as he imaginatively enters into the emperor's thoughts and feelings and penetrates events by means of metaphor.

In a manner all his own, Pazzi tells the stories of two men confronting death, and of those watching with them. A gentle, rather simple Nicholas II, one of those, like Kafka's men, "who do not know the reason for their condemnation nor the hour of their execution," nevertheless knows that both impend, and he spends his last days searching the past for some deeper acquaintance with himself, and with his tormented subjects, who have called him Little Father, but whom he has weakly allowed to be fatally misgoverned and oppressed to the point of desperation. The second man, a figure germane to the old order, an autocratic prince and colonel of a legendary regiment, whose loyalty to the Tsar is the quasi-religious myth he serves, instead drags his suffering command through the winter wastes of Siberia, searching for his idol, in the prideful hope of rescuing and reinstating him. He cannot even find, much less save, the emperor, but the appalling hecatomb he offers up in the effort (even after he knows it to be hopeless) costs the lives of nearly all his men, and finally his own by suicide. The humbler Tsar is better able to mediate his world by meaning, and to find what he is looking for, in the acknowledgment of his failures and in the recognition that now the sacrifice of his life—as of a seed falling into the ground before it can bear fruit—is essential to the future of his people. Acceptance of this realization at last establishes him truly in his ordained role.

Exit the king.

David Herlihy

DAVID HERLIHY *is Mary Critchfield and Barnaby Keeney Professor of History at Brown University and president-elect of the American Historical Association.*

This bicentennial year of the outbreak of the French Revolution has understandably inspired a spate of books. The manifest failures of the Russian and Chinese revolutions clearly have affected how contemporary historians view the events of 1789. Did the violence of the French Revolution bring progress? Can revolutions ever achieve society's total renewal?

J. B. Bosher (*The French Revolution*; Norton, $24.45, 353 pp.) argues that no laws of history made revolution in France inevitable. Bosher sees no value in the classic Marxist interpretation, that this was a "bourgeois" uprising, a step toward the equally inevitable proletarian revolution. The only social division that makes sense for him is between the "populace"—by which he means the uneducated masses—and the "public," the educated elites. The changes wrought by revolution were not nearly as profound or as lasting as older interpretations pretended.

Emmett Kennedy (*A Cultural History of the French Revolution*, Yale, $35, 449 pp.) looks at the cultural impact of the revolution on three levels: in the long term (chiefly popular customs), the middle term (the Enlightenment, Christianity, Romanticism), and the short term (literature, theater, art, and much else). The most profound contribution of the revolution was the tradition of republicanism and politics itself, but Christianity also persisted, as did many popular customs.

Simon Schama (*Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*, Knopf, $29.45, 512 pp.) concludes that the revolution blocked progress in France for at least a decade, and he shows great sympathy toward those who resisted its policies. He calls the bloody suppression of the Catholic peasants of the Vendée a genocide. Rejecting all sociological analyses, Schama is free to exploit the drama of the revolutionary events. His text is wonderfully fluid and readable and is well supported by scores of curious, contemporary illustrations.

An even longer and less flamboyant work is *Critical Dictionary of the French Revolution* (Harvard, $69.95, 1168 pp.), edited by two French historians, François Furet and Mona Ozouf, and translated by Arthur Goldhammer. An international team

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of twenty-four historians, including four Americans, contributes ninety-nine essays, arranged alphabetically by key words. They are also grouped into five major sections—on events, actors, institutions, ideas, and historians, respectively. Much attention is given to the peasant opponents of the revolution, who made up the *chouannerie* (a kind of guerrilla movement) and to the revolt in the Vendée. Religion looms quite large in the *Dictionary*; there are entries for "Dechristianization" and "Revolutionary Religion." The dictionary is "critical," say the editors, because it subscribes to no "bloc theory" of revolutionary origins. They rather concentrate on tensions and contradictions: for example, on the persecution of recalcitrant minorities by those who pretended to know the "general will" of the people. They see in the present French government a kind of "monarchical republic" that has finally reconciled the political traditions of ancient and revolutionary France. And the cult of *la patrie*, another part of the revolutionary heritage, today fades amid prospects of a united Europe. This uniquely organized book is perhaps the most thoughtful and thought-provoking of the many similar texts this year has produced.

Modern events affect historical perspectives. Events in Russia and in China are helping to dislodge the French Revolution from the proud place it once held in schemes of human progress.

Robert H. Bell

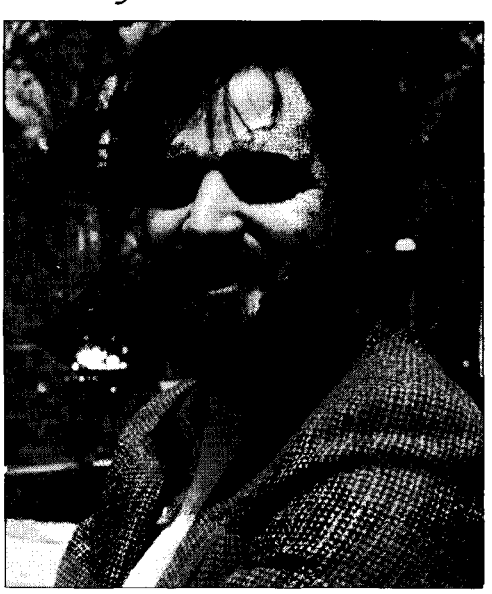
ROBERT H. BELL, *professor of English at Williams College, is currently enjoying a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship to complete a book about comedy in James Joyce's* Ulysses.

Two of my favorite writers, who deserve more attention than they have yet received, published fiction in 1989. The first is David Lodge, author of such hilarious and clever books as *Changing Places* (Penguin, $4.95, 251 pp., paper) and *Small World* (Macmillan, $15.95, 339 pp.). Though Lodge is a distinguished literary critic whose fictions depict university life, his novels transcend the genre of academic comedy. This year's offering, *Nice Work* (Viking, $18.95, 277 pp.), is perhaps his richest achievement so far. The story juxtaposes and brings together a young, post-structuralist, feminist literature professor and a middle-aged, conventional, put-upon businessman in a Birmingham-like English city. The characters are treated with pointed but tender irony, so that they learn from each other and we can learn from them. Among other things, *Nice Work* is a wry romance, a fine short course in contemporary literary theory, and a detailed evocation of an industrial plant. It's very funny, deeply touching, and thoroughly engaging. If you like it enough to try Lodge's earlier novels, *Small World* stands separately but is a sequel to *Changing Places*.

A second fiction writer whose work has long been admired by critics and a growing band of devotees is Francine Prose. A new collection of her stories, *Women and Children First* (Ivy, $3.95, 179 pp., paper)

Dr. Steven J. Kraftchick, assistant professor of New Testament:

"What I'm trying to do at Princeton is to help students pose questions about the New Testament in such a way that its own voices are heard over the voices it is imagined to have. Much of the New Testament's richness is lost if we see it as a monochromatic picture instead of a many-hued one."



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makes available splendid short works which have brought pleasure to readers of the *New Yorker*, *Atlantic*, *Antaeus*, and other magazines. Francine Prose has a wide range and a distinctive voice, effortlessly mixing amusing satiric perceptions and astonishing spiritual revelations. In *Women and Children First*, we attend a New York Buddhist retreat, where someone describes monks in Lhasa who are supposed to be over a hundred: "Hey, it's Lost Horizon city up there." The heroine of that story, "Tibetan Time," considers that, "for many people, the moment before they crack into a fortune cookie is probably the closest they ever come to a moment of genuine spiritual awe."

Whatever world Prose imagines, she renders with impeccable precision and telling detail. Her first novel, when she was barely out of college, was the furthest thing imaginable from the usual autobiographical first work: she invented a new Hasidic tale, funny, suspenseful, and breathtakingly beautiful, called *Judah the Pious* (G. K. Hall, $5.95, 279 pp., paper). A second novel, *Household Saints* (G. K. Hall, temporarily out of print), depicts Italian working-class New Yorkers in the early 1950s, and moves seamlessly from broad comedy to genuine revelation. In my home, Francine Prose is considered something of a household saint. Two other Prose novels I have enjoyed are *Hungry Hearts* (Pantheon, $12.95, 224 pp.) and *Bigfoot Dreams* (Penguin, $6.95, 256 pp., paper).

I also read lots of Roald Dahl to my children. The author of several canny and randy stories for grownups, Dahl has a fantastic Dickensian vision. Probably his best-known children's story, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Bantam, $2.75, 176 pp., paper) was made into a serviceable film, starring Gene Wilder as Willie Wonka. Two others we love are *The Witches* (Puffin, $3.95, 208 pp., paper) and Dahl's latest, *Matilda* (Penguin, $14.95, 224 pp.). The story of a gifted, emotionally-abused child saved by her teacher, *Matilda*, illustrates Dahl's genius for creating larger-than-life, wicked characters and bringing about believable fairy-tale transformations.

Some readers, it should be said, find Dahl's grotesque characters and biting satire too acerbic and frightening. Michele Landsberg, in her generally reliable *Reading for the Love of It: Best Books for Young Readers* (Prentice Hall Press, $10.95, 325 pp., paper) deplores Dahl's "sadism and black humor," which seems to me a wild misreading. Dahl's wicked and foolish characters are perfect for the grown-up reader to impersonate and spoof. More important, Dahl's world is never unrelievedly cruel: there are often deeply touching relationships between adults and children, such as between Charlie and his grandfather, Matilda and her teacher, the hero of *The Witches* and his grandmother: allies oppose the dangerous villains and enable goodness. If you have a taste for Dahl, you'll also want to read his excellent autobiography, *Boy: Tales of Childhood* (Penguin, $6.95, 176 pp., paper), which was as fascinating to my daughter Kaitlin as to her dad. Most of Dahl's books come with plentiful illustrations by Quentin Blake.

Patrick Jordan

PATRICK JORDAN *is an associate editor of* Commonweal.

Once again we can raise our hats to the gifted, literate clinical neurologist, Oliver Sacks, for taking us into yet another foreign land (*Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf*, University of California Press, $15.95, 180 pp.). This time Sacks sheds light on the inscape and language of the deaf. He uses case studies to describe the degrees and implications of deafness, all within the context of social and medical history. As in his other masterful volumes, Sacks deals with the essential being of his subjects. But here, his own initial unfamiliarity with the deaf is so similar to our own, his insights and discoveries flash open with the brilliance and resonance of a Wynton Marsalis trumpet air.

A classical, contemporary example of the theological mind at its clearest is Nicholas Lash's *Easter in Ordinary: Reflections on Human Experience and the Knowledge of God* (University Press of Virginia, $29.95, 313 pp.). This complex, distilled, but deeply affecting study of

William James, Newman, von Hügel, and Buber, among others, is the choice product of the believing theologian's art. Tradition rebottled with an awareness of postmodern needs but not necessarily with mass-market tastes in mind. Demanding, uncommon, quenching.

Just as the prophetic charism historically came to rest with singular power on Martin Luther King, Jr., so ten years ago that power fashioned a prophet for Latin America: Oscar Romero. *The Violence of Love: The Pastoral Wisdom of Archbishop Oscar Romero*, compiled by James R. Brockman, S.J. (Harper & Row, $12.95, 242 pp.), gives a sense of Romero's evolving, unshakable bonding with his people. His courage and purity of purpose have enlarged the humanity of a hemisphere. His words have the authentic ring of the Scriptures.

A Revolution of the Heart (Temple University Press, $34.95, 388 pp.), a collection of essays in the ever-expanding literature on the Catholic Worker movement. Edited by Patrick G. Coy, it combines historical essays on the usual primary suspects (Peter Maurin, Dorothy Day, Ammon Hennacy), with discussions of the movement's politics, pacifism, and spirituality, and several chapters on lesser-known C.W. houses. The most useful section is a chapter on the daily experience and practice of nonviolence in the Catholic Worker's neighborhood centers, particularly the St. Louis house. No pale pacifism here but practical instances of what Richard Gregg called the power of nonviolence.

For a sense of the inventiveness and tenacity of the human spirit in the face of today's empires, John leCarré's engaging *The Russia House* (Knopf, $19.95, 353 pp.). Disheartening insights into the American character, grossed-out by post-war wealth and power. The scene at Pasternak's grave is triumphant.

Finally, a useful manual at home: *The*

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Collins Bible Handbook by Jacques Musset (distributed by Harper & Row, $14.95, 528 pp.). An Audubon Society-like field guide to the geography, historical time frames, flora and fauna, personages, and themes of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Cross-referenced and beautifully illustrated in full color, a book of many hours for all ages.

David Burns

DAVID BURNS *directs the Climate Project of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C.*

Since the blazing summer of 1988, global climate change caused by a buildup of greenhouse gases has been high on everyone's list of things to worry about. Two new books provide background and perspective. *Global Warming: Are We Entering the Greenhouse Century?* (Sierra Club Books, $18.95, 317 pp.) by Stephen H. Schneider, who devises "numerical experiments" at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, is written by the best of a rare breed of experts who are skillful at communicating scientific findings in ways the rest of us can understand. He is an excellent writer, and his treatment of the mind-boggling climate system, as full of loops and feedbacks as a Rube Goldberg machine, is a model of clarity and thoroughness. He separates fact from speculation—and distinguishes both from personal opinion. He makes plain what scientists know for sure about climate change (relatively little), and what they know only in part or not at all (a lot). He conveys a tone of deep concern, but his suggestions about what to do are moderate and sensible. The book lays out the evidence: greenhouse climate change has the potential to cause very serious and very nasty impacts; concern is fully justified. But the book is also honest: it says frankly that there are no simple answers—either for scientists or policy-makers.

In *The End of Nature* (Random House, $19.95, 226 pp.), Bill McKibben is far more interested in feelings (and boy! is he ever "in touch" with them!) than facts. The first section of the book, "A New Atmosphere," is a useful summary of the greenhouse issue, even though it is based on secondary sources and contains several howlers. But this is merely a jumping-off point for the remaining four sections, which expatiate on human beings' relation to the natural world. No one disputes that human activities are making profound changes in the natural systems on which we depend, nor that the trends are troubling and, in some areas, even ominous. Nor is there any dispute that these problems must be *urgently* addressed; we have no choice. There is much work to be done—beginning with a better understanding of what is happening—a never-ending task of monitoring and analysis. We must also choose among competing demands and sort out the costs and benefits of various actions which might encourage helpful trends and might reverse those that are harmful. The McKibben book, excerpted in the *New Yorker* and picked up by the Book of the Month Club and nine overseas publishers, will appeal more to those who relish the Romantic poets, while the Schneider book will appeal to those who prefer non-fiction prose. Ultimately, the Schneider book is more satisfying because it offers practical help in the difficult choices which confront us in the real world.

Two other books stand out from the pack: *From Creation to Chaos: Classic Writings in Science* (Blackwell, $29.95, 280 pp.) is an anthology of writings by scientists. The earliest piece is from 1600, the most recent from 1985. The book is edited by Bernard Dixon, European editor of *The Scientist*, with the advice of an editorial panel which included Fred Hoyle, Peter Medawar, and Jonathan Miller. Their chief criterion was literary excellence—and every piece passes the test. *Science à la Mode: Physical Fashions and Fictions* (Princeton University Press, $19.95, 207 pp.) brings together six essays by Tony Rothman—writing with great erudition—on fads in cosmology; evidence that Buckminster Fuller was not the inventor of the geodesic dome; statistical mechanics of Boltzman, Shannon's information theory, and Rifkind's algeny concept; a critique of "nuclear winter"; and the legends surrounding the last days of Evariste Galois, a mathematician who helped develop group theory.

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Peggy R. Ellsberg

PEGGY R. ELLSBERG *teaches in the English Department at Barnard College.*

Reading to children under the age of four has been more fun than ever in 1989, partly because of the year's dazzling harvest of fabulously illustrated storybooks. My favorites among them include Jan Brett's *Beauty and the Beast* (Clarion Books, $14.95, 29 pp.) and her new version of the Ukrainian folk tale, *The Mitten* (G.P. Putnam's Sons, $12.95, 29 pp.). Anyone who has seen Jan Brett's *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (Dodd, Mead & Co., $12.95, 29 pp.) with its prodigiously precise and engaging Black Forest domestic setting, each page bordered like the Book of Kells with honeybees, mice, and folk art motifs, will not have forgotten it. And now, in *Beauty and the Beast* and in *The Mitten*, people, animals, and a Central European world-we-have-lost are rendered in luscious and almost three-dimensional detail.

Beauty goes to live in the Beast's palace, which is outfitted in the most sumptuous eighteenth-century Grand Style. Decorated archways are hung with dozens of yards of silk; marble bas-reliefs are draped with roses and trailing peacock tails. Beauty is greeted by a spaniel dressed like Mozart, and at dinner that evening chamber music is played by an elk, an otter, and a wolf gotten up in the most extraordinary plum-colored frock coats. A monkey whose haberdasher might have been the Tailor of Gloucester carries a tray of fruits that might have been arranged by Lutèce. Beauty's life at the palace is luxurious and amusing, and the Beast himself is thoughtful, intelligent, and kind. Unfortunately, he is some sort of warthog or boar in wealthy gentleman's clothing. Of course, when Beauty agrees to marry him, despite his twisted tusks, his bristling cheeks, and his sloping, leathery snout, he turns into a good-looking prince. The white horse upon which they gallop away toward happiness wears a saddle-blanket made of white peacock feathers.

The Mitten, illustrated with the same richness of care and color, is a more Spartan tale, featuring a simple, snowy landscape, a boy, the mittens his Baba knits for him, and the Brett-trademark animals. Many of these animals try to squeeze into one lost mitten. The particular charm of this book lies in the illuminated borders of each page, which tell their own story.

Nettie Jo's Friends by Patricia McKissock, illustrated by Scott Cook (Alfred A. Knopf, $12.95, 29 pp.) is gorgeous in a different way, and in a different setting. Nettie Jo is strictly American, and black, and she is going to be the flower girl at Cousin Willadean's wedding tomorrow. She wants to take her tattered doll, Annie Mae, to the wedding, but "Mama say no." Finally Mama will allow the doll to go if Nettie Jo makes her a new little dress. The rest of the story, narrated with tremendous élan, concerns the child's search for a sewing needle. The pictures are a chiaroscuro mixture of cloudlight, twilight, candlelight, and moonlight, with a Cézanne palette of color. Scott Cook seems to have studied at the National Academy in the late Victorian

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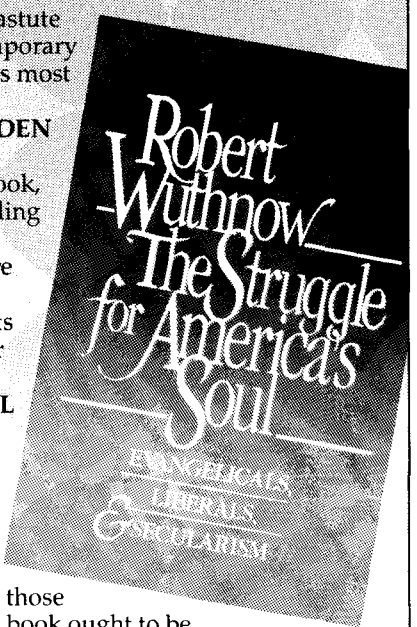

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period, and then loosed his painterly brush on the wildly animated and warmly glowing figures of Nettie Jo and her friends. The friends—Miz Rabbit, Fox, and Panther—are stuffed toys dressed in doll clothes who skip, dance, and speak to the meters of black English. Finally, their antics in high gear, they race past Nettie Jo as she stands on her dimly-lit porch, her hair ribbon and braids alert, her pinafore flipping upward. They drop a sewing needle at her feet in the moonlight. "Here comes the bride!" sings Nettie Joe, skipping off to sew.

The Market Square Dog by James Herriot, illustrated by Ruth Brown (St. Martin's Press, $10.95, 29 pp.) is a good book for the slightly older preschooler and dog-lovers of every age. A sweet little stray dog begs in the marketplace, is hit by a car, and after a series of Herriotic veterinary adventures, finds a happy home. The illustrations are magnificent. They are just the sort of thing you hope will imprint on the new memory screen of a young child: fresh, clear, pure, and good. The wholesome blue sky and green Yorkshire countryside, the kindly bobby, the water-color English folk in their dowdy, ageless clothes and Wellington boots, the wicker baskets and cobblestones, and especially the deliberate, pandemically civilized concern for the stray dog make you sure that there will always be an England.

Fred Siegel

FRED SIEGEL *is spending the year at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.*

My choices, I'm afraid, are a somber set of selections, little calculated to bring joy or comfort. They reflect the preoccupations of someone who has been trying to take the temperature of the times. In a year when the static from judicially generated issues fills the political airwaves, two books, Robert Nagel's *Constitutional Cultures: The Mentality and Consequences of Judicial Review* (University of California Press, $27.50, 244 pp.), and Sandy Levinson's *Constitutional Faith* (Princeton University Press, $19.95, 216 pp.), help make sense of what's happened. Levinson's argument traces the conflicts over constitutional interpretation to the Reformation struggle between Catholics and Protestants over how to interpret Scripture. Nagel presents a down-to-earth view of the limitations and liabilities of judicial policymaking.

For a look at the disastrous consequences of policy toward the mentally ill that has enriched the psychiatric profession and cleansed the consciences of activist lawyers at the expense of those who needed their help, E. Fuller Torrey's compelling *Nowhere to Go: The Tragic Odyssey of the Homeless Mentally Ill* (Harper & Row, $18.95, 256 pp.), is unsurpassed. Alan Ryan's brisk biography, *Bertrand Russell: A Political Life* (Hill & Wang, $19.95, 256 pp.), examines the mix of scientism and subjectivism which has left contemporary liberalism politically rudderless. Reading Ryan on Russell made me appreciate Louis Hartz's 1955 classic, *The Liberal Tradition in America*, still the best book ever written on the subject.

Eric Foner's magisterial *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (Harper & Row, $29.45, 736 pp.) reunites narrative and analytic history to illuminate the end of the first Reconstruction just as the second is coming to a close. For those puzzled as I have been at the connection between dance and modern culture, two powerful and readable books—Modris Eksteins's *The Rites of Spring* (Houghton Mifflin, $24.95, 384 pp.) and Lynn Garafola's *Diaghalev's Ballets Russes* (Oxford University Press, $29.95, 512 pp.)—make sense of the evanescent movements that fill the stage. *Israel's Fateful Hour* (Harper & Row, $22.50, 256 pp.), written by the Israeli hawk turned realistic dove, Yehoshafat Harkabi, is essential reading for anyone interested in peace in the Middle East. On a practical note anyone who has languished over an unreadable computer manual might want to turn to *Peter Norton's DOS Guide* (A Brady Book, $19.95, 350 pp.), written by none other than Peter Norton, creator of the Norton Utilities package. It does a wonderful job of making clear cut sense of DOS (disk operating systems).

This has been a poor year for books on American politics. The best book of the year may not have been a book at all but rather Thomas Edsall's *Power and Money: Writings on Politics, 1971-1987* (Norton, $19.45, 374 pp.), a collection of gritty essays by the *Washington Post* reporter. Finally, for all those either bemused or horrified by the academic fashion of deconstruction which suggests that words, like unruly children, just can't be made to behave, I recommend David Lodge's wry novel *Nice Work* (Viking, $18.95, 277 pp.) and an older book, Catherine Clement's 1983 *The Lives and Legends of Jacques Lacan* (Columbia University Press, $27, 232 pp.). Clement's memoir of her time as an intellectual groupie is, in the words of Milton Berle, a laugh a minute.

Denise Lardner Carmody

DENISE LARDNER CARMODY *is professor and chair of the Faculty of Religion at the University of Tulsa. One of her most recent books is* How to Live Well: Ethics in the World Religions *(Wadsworth).*

Four volumes that I have read recently offer good value. Raymond Carver's *A New Path to the Waterfall* (Atlantic Monthly Press, $13.95, 144 pp.) is a collection of poems haunted by the author's terminal cancer. The introduction by his wife, the poet Tess Gallagher, gives the biographical and literary context: what Carver had on his mind during the time he was writing, and why poetry rather than the short story, his usual genre, drew his spirit. The book makes clear the nourishment that both Carver and Gallagher found in the stories of Anton Chekhov, and without any sentimentality it places before us not only death but life, made the more precious for its quick passing. Few of the traditional words for Christian faith and hope surface, but many equivalents arise, because the reflecting, the regretting, and the giving thanks are so honest and artful.

A. G. Mojtabai's novel *Ordinary Time* (Doubleday, $17.95, 223 pp.) puts into fiction many of the lessons conveyed in her arresting report on life in Amarillo under the shadow of assembling nuclear weapons, *Blessed Assurance* (Houghton

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Mifflin). Here, though, the hard life of the Texas high plains makes all sorts of faith, evangelical-ecstatic and Catholic-dour, so ordinary that they become dramatic. The two principal characters, the owner of a restaurant and the pastor of a dwindling Catholic parish, are moved by the most striking feature of their town's life, the fact that virtually nothing happens, to probe the dryness and darkness of their own souls. Henrietta, the restaurant owner, thinks she may shrivel of loneliness. Father Gilvray, the pastor, is going blind and wondering whether his priestly life has accomplished anything. As they move through the great swath of the liturgical calendar when nothing special is being celebrated, Mojtabai prods us to strip the gawdy outer garments from faith and contemplate the naked essence.

William A. Barry's *Seek My Face* (Paulist, $4.95, 112 pp.) is subtitled "Prayer as Personal Relationship in Scripture." It puts into readable, affectively attractive form the counsel that psychology and spiritual theology offer people wanting to meet Christ and unburden themselves. In the background lies the practice of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola known as the "application of the senses." In the foreground stands the liberating advice to express one's grievances, fears, guilts, doubts—everything that has kept one from trusting God enough to speak heart to heart. The combination is wise and warm, bringing solid theology to bear on living faith.

The September 1989 issue of *Theological Studies* is the third of this journal's fiftieth anniversary issues. It concentrates on systematic theology and amounts to both a review of where speculative theology has been during the past fifty years and where it now stands. Avery Dulles surveys ecclesiology; Michael Buckley studies American atheism; Monika Hellwig reviews the emergence of the human, critical, and public Jesus in Christology; John Meyendorf writes about the understanding of salvation in recent Orthodox theology; Elizabeth Johnson discusses new analyses of Mary in light of exposing the female face of God; Edward Kilmartin analyses the sacraments as the liturgy of the church; and David Tracy describes where postmodern trends leave Catholic theological method. The result for me was being brought up to speed by fine tutors and finding Catholic theology quite alive.

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